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MEMOIRS

OF THE

LIFE AND WRITINGS

OF

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN,

LL.D. F.R.S. &c. &c.

VOL. II.

FAC SIMILE OF THE HAND WRITING OF Dr FRANKLIN.

Philad.a July 5. 1775

M.r Strahan,*

You are a Member of Parliament, and one of that Majority which has doomed my Country to Destruction. — You have begun to burn our Towns, and murder our People. — Look upon your Hands! — They are stained with the Blood of your Relations! — You and I were long Friends: — You are now my Enemy, — and

I am,

Yours,

B Franklin

* King's Printer London.

Engraved by Will.m Hall

Published by Henry Colburn Conduit Street London 1815.

MEMOIRS

OF THE

LIFE AND WRITINGS

OF

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, LL.D.

F.R.S. &c.

MINISTER PLENIPOTENTIARY

FROM THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, AT THE COURT OF FRANCE,

AND FOR THE TREATY OF PEACE AND INDEPENDENCE WITH GREAT BRITAIN,

&c. &c.

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF TO A LATE PERIOD,

AND CONTINUED TO THE TIME OF HIS DEATH,

BY HIS GRANDSON;

WILLIAM TEMPLE FRANKLIN.

NOW FIRST PUBLISHED FROM THE ORIGINAL MSS.

COMPRISING THE

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AND A SELECTION FROM HIS

POLITICAL, PHILOSOPHICAL, AND MISCELLANEOUS WORKS.

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THE

PRIVATE CORRESPONDENCE

OF

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN,

LL. D. F. R. S. &c. &c.

PREFACE

TO THE PRIVATE CORRESPONDENCE.

FAMILIAR letters have been usually considered as exhibiting a portraiture of the human mind; and though perhaps they are not always to be so regarded, especially in the intercourse of public men upon subjects involving particular interests and questions of national policy, yet even from these documents the most valuable materials of history are drawn, and the secret springs of great events are disclosed. Hence it is, that a deserved importance has ever been attached to the correspondence of persons who have figured with distinction in political revolutions, and the foundation of new states: for hereby are unfolded the motives of individuals, and the influence of parties; from whose pertinacity and intrigues proceed conflicts, projects, and establishments which the agitators never contemplated, and which the most sagacious observers of human nature could not have anticipated.

Among the changes that have taken place in the condition of political society, the separation of the American colonies from the

parent country has been by far the most prolific and extensive in its effects of any in the history of modern ages.

It is presumed, therefore, that little need be said on the value of the correspondence of DR. FRANKLIN, whose extraordinary abilities as a statesman were felt and acknowledged in both countries, and by persons of opposite sentiments. But what renders his letters on the public concerns in which he was engaged peculiarly interesting, is the spirit of candour that runs through the whole of them, and the style of simplicity by which they are recommended as models of epistolary composition, and stamped beyond all question as authorities of the first character, though certainly not written with a view to publication. Here will be seen to equal advantage, the philosopher and the man of business, the moralist and negociator, the profound legislator, and the familiar friend, who opens his mind and delivers his sentiments with the same ingenuousness on matters of science and policy, the conduct of private life and the interests of nations. The correspondence contained in this collection, is indeed a store of the soundest lessons of practical wisdom upon subjects of universal moment, and it is also a repository of information which will afford the best instruction to politicians, and will prove a sure guide to the future historian, who shall undertake the task of recording the several stages that have led to the establishment of American Independence, with the consequences of that event upon the states of Europe. The MEMOIRS and CORRESPONDENCE of DR. FRANKLIN will shew much more clearly the great chain on which the fate of nations depends, than the debates of senates, the cabals of cabinets, or the details

of battles; and to an Englishman, the Letters, now for the first time published, will be curious and important in a very high degree, as throwing a strong light upon the early part of the present reign, and upon the characters of those persons who had a principal share in the counsels which produced the dismemberment of the British empire, and the creation of a power, which, from being a dependent state, has become its most formidable rival.

ADVERTISEMENT.

Unavoidable circumstances having retarded the printing of the first Volume of the MEMOIRS of DR. FRANKLIN, it has been deemed expedient to give his PRIVATE CORRESPONDENCE the precedence in the order of publication; but as that portion of the work which contains his Life is in a state of considerable forwardness at the press, the public may be assured that its appearance will not be delayed beyond a few weeks.

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OF
BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

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OF

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

PRIVATE CORRESPONDENCE:

PART I.

LETTERS ON MISCELLANEOUS SUBJECTS.

To George Whitefield.[1]

SIR, *Philadelphia, June 6, 1753.*

I received your kind letter of the 2d instant, and am glad to hear that you increase in strength; I hope you will continue mending till you recover your former health and firmness. Let me know whether you still use the cold bath, and what effect it has.

As to the kindness you mention, I wish it could have been of more service to you. But if it had, the only thanks I should desire is, that you would always be equally ready to serve any other person that may need your assistance, and so let good offices go round; for mankind are all of a family.

For my own part, when I am employed in serving others, I do not look upon my-

[1] One of the founders of the Methodists; born at Glocester, 1714, died in New England, 1770. See Vol. I. Part 2, p. 84.

self as conferring favours, but as paying debts. In my travels, and since my settlement, I have received much kindness from men, to whom I shall never have any opportunity of making the least direct return; and numberless mercies from God, who is infinitely above being benefited by our services. Those kindnesses from men, I can therefore only return on their fellow men, and I can only show my gratitude for these mercies from God, by a readiness to help his other children, and my brethren. For I do not think that thanks and compliments, though repeated weekly, can discharge our real obligations to each other, and much less those to our Creator. You will see in this my notion of good works, that I am far from expecting to merit heaven by them. By heaven we understand a state of happiness, infinite in degree, and eternal in duration: I can do nothing to deserve such rewards. He that for giving a draught of water to a thirsty person, should expect to be paid with a good plantation, would be modest in his demands, compared with those who think they deserve heaven for the little good they do on earth. Even the mixed imperfect pleasures we enjoy in this world, are rather from God's goodness than our merit: how much more such happiness of heaven! For my part, I have not the vanity to think I deserve it, the folly to expect it, nor the ambition to desire it; but content myself in submitting to the will and disposal of that God who made me, who has hitherto preserved and blessed me, and in whose fatherly goodness I may well confide, that he will never make me miserable; and that even the afflictions I may at any time suffer shall tend to my benefit.

The faith you mention has certainly its use in the world: I do not desire to see it diminished, nor would I endeavour to lessen it in any man. But I wish it were more productive of good works, than I have generally seen it: I mean real good works; works of kindness, charity, mercy, and public spirit; not holiday-keeping, sermon-reading, or hearing; performing church ceremonies, or making long prayers, filled with flatteries and compliments, despised even by wise men, and much less capable of pleasing the Deity. The worship of God is a duty; the hearing and reading of sermons may be useful; but if men rest in hearing and praying, as too many do, it is as if a tree should value itself on being watered and putting forth leaves, though it never produced any fruit.

Your great master thought much less of these outward appearances and professions, than many of his modern disciples. He preferred the *doers* of the word to the mere *hearers;* the son that seemingly refused to obey his father, and yet performed his commands, to him that professed his readiness but neglected the work; the heretical but charitable Samaritan, to the uncharitable though orthodox priest,

and sanctified Levite; and those who gave food to the hungry, drink to the thirsty, raiment to the naked, entertainment to the stranger, and relief to the sick, though they never heard of his name, he declares shall in the last day be accepted; when those who cry Lord! Lord! who value themselves upon their faith, though great enough to perform miracles, but have neglected good works, shall be rejected. He professed that he came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance; which implied his modest opinion that there were some in his time who thought themselves so good that they need not hear even him for improvement; but now-a-days we have scarce a little parson that does not think it the duty of every man within his reach to sit under his petty ministrations; and that whoever omits them, offends God. I wish to such more humility, and to you health and happiness; being

Your friend and servant, B. FRANKLIN.

To MISS STEVENSON, AT WANSTEAD.

Craven Street, May 16, 1760.

I send my good girl the books I mentioned to her last night. I beg her to accept of them as a small mark of my esteem and friendship. They are written in the familiar easy manner for which the French are so remarkable; and afford a good deal of philosophic and practical knowledge unembarrassed with the dry mathematics, used by more exact reasoners, but which is apt to discourage young beginners.

I would advise you to read with a pen in your hand, and enter in a little book short hints of what you find that is curious, or that may be useful; for this will be the best method of imprinting such particulars in your memory, where they will be ready, either for practice on some future occasion, if they are matters of utility; or at least to adorn and improve your conversation, if they are rather points of curiosity. And as many of the terms of science are such as you cannot have met with in your common reading, and may therefore be unacquainted with, I think it would be well for you to have a good dictionary at hand, to consult immediately when you meet with a word you do not comprehend the precise meaning of. This may at first seem troublesome and interrupting; but it is a trouble that will daily diminish, as you will daily find less and less occasion for your dictionary as you become more acquainted with the terms; and in the mean time you will read with more satisfaction, because with more understanding. When any point occurs, in which you would be glad to have farther information than your book affords you, I beg you would not in the least apprehend, that I should think it a trouble to receive and answer your questions.

It will be a pleasure, and no trouble. For though I may not be able, out of my own little stock of knowledge, to afford you what you require, I can easily direct you to the books, where it may most readily be found. Adieu, and believe me ever, my dear friend, Your's affectionately, B. FRANKLIN.

To JOHN BASKERVILLE,[1] THE PRINTER.

DEAR SIR, *Craven Street, London*, 1760.

Let me give you a pleasant instance of the prejudice some have entertained against your work. Soon after I returned, discoursing with a gentleman concerning the artists of Birmingham, he said you would be a means of blinding all the readers in the nation; for the strokes of your letters being too thin and narrow, hurt the eye, and he could never read a line of them without pain. I thought, said I, you were going to complain of the gloss of the paper, some object to. "No, no," said he, "I have heard that mentioned, but it is not that; it is in the form and cut of the letters themselves; they have not that height and thickness of the stroke, which makes the common printing so much the more comfortable to the eye."—You see this gentleman was a *connoisseur*. In vain I endeavoured to support your character against the charge; he knew what he felt, and could see the reason of it, and several other gentlemen among his friends had made the same observation, &c. Yesterday he called to visit me, when, mischievously bent to try his judgment, I stepped into my closet, tore off the top of Mr. Caslon's specimen, and produced it to him as yours, brought with me from Birmingham; saying, I had

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[1] JOHN BASKERVILLE, the celebrated type founder and printer, was born in 1706, at Wolverley, in the County of Worcester. Having a small estate of about sixty pounds a year, he was not bred to any profession; but in 1726, he became a schoolmaster at Birmingham, which he continued many years. Afterwards he entered upon the japanning business, which succeeded so well as to enable him to purchase a country house and to set up his carriage; each pannel of which was a distinct picture, and the whole might be considered as a pattern card of his trade. In 1750, he began business as a type-founder, on which he spent many hundreds before he could produce a letter to please himself. By perseverance he overcame all obstacles, and in 1756 published an edition of Virgil in quarto, which was followed by Paradise Lost, the Bible, Common Prayer, and several other works. In 1765, he applied to Dr. Franklin, then at Paris, to sound the literati there respecting the purchase of his types, but the proposal was not accepted. They were many years after purchased by the celebrated M. De Beaumarchais, and employed in the printing his edition of the works of Voltaire. Baskerville died at Birmingham, in 1775; and as he had an aversion to churchyards, he was by his own direction buried in a mausoleum erected on his own grounds.

been examining it, since he spoke to me, and could not for my life perceive the disproportion he mentioned, desiring him to point it out to me. He readily undertook it, and went over the several founts, shewing me every where what he thought instances of that disproportion; and declared, that he could not then read the specimen without feeling very strongly the pain he had mentioned to me. I spared him that time, the confusion of being told, that these were the types, he had been reading all his life with so much ease to his eyes; the types his adored Newton is printed with, on which he has pored not a little; nay, the very types his own book is printed with; (for he is himself an author) and yet never discovered this painful disproportion in them, till he thought they were yours. I am &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

To JOHN ALLEYNE, ESQ.

DEAR JACK, *Craven Street, August* 9, 1768.

You desire, you say, my impartial thoughts on the subject of an early marriage, by way of answer to the numberless objections that have been made by numerous persons to your own. You may remember, when you consulted me on the occasion, that I thought youth on both sides to be no objection. Indeed, from the marriages that have fallen under my observation, I am rather inclined to think, that early ones stand the best chance of happiness. The temper and habits of the young are not yet become so stiff and uncomplying, as when more advanced in life; they form more easily to each other, and hence many occasions of disgust are removed. And if youth has less of that prudence which is necessary to manage a family, yet the parents and elder friends of young married persons are generally at hand to afford their advice, which amply supplies that defect; and by early marriage, youth is sooner formed to regular and useful life; and possibly some of those accidents or connections, that might have injured the constitution, or reputation, or both, are thereby happily prevented. Particular circumstances of particular persons, may possibly sometimes make it prudent to delay entering into that state; but in general when nature has rendered our bodies fit for it, the presumption is in nature's favor, that she has not judged amiss in making us desire it. Late marriages are often attended, too, with this further inconvenience, that there is not the same chance that the parents shall live to see their offspring educated. "*Late children,*" says the Spanish proverb, "*are early orphans.*" A melancholy reflection to those whose case it may be! With us in America, marriages are generally in the morning of life; our children are therefore educated and settled in the world by noon; and

thus, our business being done, we have an afternoon and evening of cheerful leisure to ourselves; such as our friend at present enjoys. By these early marriages we are blessed with more children; and from the mode among us, founded by nature, of every mother suckling and nursing her own child, more of them are raised. Thence the swift progress of population among us, unparalleled in Europe. In fine, I am glad you are married, and congratulate you most cordially upon it. You are now in the way of becoming a useful citizen; and you have escaped the unnatural state of celibacy for life—the fate of many here, who never intended it, but who having too long postponed the change of their condition, find, at length, that it is too late to think of it, and so live all their lives in a situation that greatly lessens a man's value. An odd volume of a set of books, bears not the value of its proportion to the set: what think you of the odd half of a pair of scissars? it can't well cut any thing; it may possibly serve to scrape a trencher.

Pray make my compliments and best wishes acceptable to your bride. I am old and heavy, or I should ere this have presented them in person. I shall make but small use of the old man's privilege, that of giving advice to younger friends. Treat your wife always with respect; it will procure respect to you, not only from her, but from all that observe it. Never use a slighting expression to her, even in jest, for slights in jest, after frequent bandyings, are apt to end in angry earnest. Be studious in your profession, and you will be learned. Be industrious and frugal, and you will be rich. Be sober and temperate, and you will be healthy. Be in general virtuous, and you will be happy. At least, you will, by such conduct, stand the best chance for such consequences. I pray God to bless you both; being ever your affectionate friend, B. FRANKLIN.

To MICHAEL COLLINSON, ESQ.

DEAR SIR, [No date.] (supposed to be in 1768 or 1769.)

Understanding that an account of our dear departed friend, Mr. Peter Collinson,[1] is intended to be given to the public, I cannot omit expressing

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[1] PETER COLLINSON, F.R.S. a very celebrated botanist, was descended from a family of ancient standing in the County of Westmoreland, but born himself in 1693, in Clement's Lane, Lombard Street. His parents realized a handsome fortune by trade in Gracechurch Street, the bulk of which coming to Peter, who was the eldest son, he was enabled to follow his favourite pursuit of natural history. He had one of the finest gardens in England, at Peckham, in Surrey, whence he removed in 1749 to Mill Hill, in the parish of Hendon in Middlesex, where he died in 1768. Mr. Collinson kept up a correspondence with men of science in all parts of the world, and he sent the first electrical machine that

my approbation of the design. The characters of good men are exemplary, and often stimulate the well disposed to an imitation, beneficial to mankind, and honorable to themselves. And as you may be unacquainted with the following instances of his zeal and usefulness in promoting knowledge, which fell within my observation, I take the liberty of informing you, that in 1730, a subscription library being set on foot at Philadelphia, he encouraged the design by making several very valuable presents to it, and procuring others from his friends: and as the library company had a considerable sum arising annually to be laid out in books, and needed a judicious friend in London to transact the business for them, he voluntarily and cheerfully undertook that service, and executed it for more than thirty years successively, assisting in the choice of books, and taking the whole care of collecting and shipping them, without ever charging or accepting any consideration for his trouble. The success of this library (greatly owing to his kind countenance and good advice) encouraged the erecting others in different places on the same plan; and it is supposed there are now upwards of thirty subsisting in the several colonies, which have contributed greatly to the spreading of useful knowledge in that part of the world; the books he recommended being all of that kind, and the catalogue of this first library being much respected and followed by those libraries that succeeded.

During the same time he transmitted to the directors of the library the earliest accounts of every new European improvement in agriculture and the arts, and every philosophical discovery; among which, in 1745, he sent over an account of the new German experiments in electricity, together with a glass tube, and some directions for using it, so as to repeat those experiments. This was the first notice I had of that curious subject, which I afterwards prosecuted with some diligence, being encouraged by the friendly reception he gave to the letters I wrote to him upon it. Please to accept this small testimony of mine to his memory, for which I shall ever have the utmost respect; and believe me, with sincere esteem, dear Sir,

Your most humble servant, B. FRANKLIN.

TO MICHAEL HILLEGRAS, ESQ. PHILADELPHIA.

DEAR SIR, *London, March* 17, 1770.

I received your favor of November 25, and have made inquiries, as you desired, concerning the copper covering of houses. It has been used

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was ever seen in America, as a present to the Philosophical Society at Philadelphia. He was also a liberal contributor to the public library of that city; and an intimate friend of Dr. Franklin, who received from him many hints and papers on the subject of electricity.

here in a few instances only, and the practice does not seem to gain ground. The copper is about the thickness of a common playing card, and though a dearer metal than lead, I am told that as less weight serves, on account of its being so much thinner, and as slighter wood-work in the roof is sufficient to support it, the roof is not dearer, on the whole, than one covered with lead. It is said that hail and rain make a disagreeable drumming noise on copper; but this, I suppose, is rather fancy; for the plates being fastened to the rafters, must, in a great measure, deaden such sound. The first cost, whatever it is, will be all, as a copper covering must last for ages; and when the house decays, the plates will still have intrinsic worth. In Russia, I am informed, many houses are covered with plates of iron tinned, (such as our tin pots and other wares are made of,) laid on over the edges of one another, like tiles; and which, it is said, last very long; the tin preserving the iron from much decay by rusting. In France and the Low Countries I have seen many spouts or pipes for conveying the water down from the roofs of houses, made of the same kind of tin plates, soldered together; and they seem to stand very well.

With sincere regard, I am, yours, &c. B. FRANKLIN.

To SAMUEL RHOADS, ESQ.

DEAR FRIEND, *London, June 26, 1770.*

It is a long time since I had the pleasure of hearing from you directly. Mrs. Franklin has, indeed, now and then acquainted me of your welfare, which I am always glad to hear of. It is, I fear, partly, if not altogether, my fault that our correspondence has not been regularly continued. One thing I am sure of, that it has been from no want of regard on either side, but rather from too much business, and avocations of various kinds, and my having little of importance to communicate.

One of our good citizens, Mr. Hillegras, anxious for the future safety of our town, wrote to me some time since, desiring I would enquire concerning the covering of houses here with copper. I sent him the best information I could then obtain, [1] but

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[1] "The carpentry of the roof being formed with its proper descents, is, in the first place, sheeted or covered with deals, nailed horizontally upon the rafters, after the same manner as when intended to be covered with lead. The sheets of the copper for this covering are two feet by four, and for covering the slopes of the roof are cast so thin as to weigh eight or nine pounds, and for covering the flats or gutters, ten or eleven pounds each, or about one pound, or a pound and a quarter to the superficial foot.

A string of strong cartridge paper (over-lapping a little at its joints) is regularly tacked down upon the sheeting of wood, under the copper covering, as the work proceeds from eaves to ridge. It prevents the

have since received the inclosed from an ingenious friend, who is what they call here a civil engineer. I should be glad you would peruse it, think of the matter a little, and give me your sentiments of it. When you have done with the paper, please to give it to Mr. Hillegras. I am told by Lord Despencer, who has covered a long piazza, or gallery, with copper, that the expence is charged in this account too high, for his cost but one shilling and tenpence per foot, all charges included. I suppose his copper must have been thinner. And, indeed, it is so strong a metal, that I think it may well be used very thin.

It appears to me of great importance to build our dwelling-houses, if we can, in a manner more secure from danger by fire. We scarcely ever hear of fire in Paris. When I was there, I took particular notice of the construction of their houses, and I did not see how one of them could well be burnt. The roofs are slate or tile, the

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jingling sound of hail or rain falling upon the roof, and answers another purpose, to be mentioned by and by.

In order to shew the regular process of laying down the roof, we must begin with fastening two sheets together lengthwise. The edges of two sheets are laid down so as to lap or cover each other an inch, and a slip of the same copper, about three and a half inches broad, called the reeve, is introduced between them. Four oblong holes or slits, are then cut or punched through the whole, and they are fastened or riveted together by copper nails, with small round shanks and flat heads. Indents are then cut $1\frac{1}{2}$ inch deep upon the seam at top and bottom. The right-hand sheet and the reeve are then folded back to the left. The reeve is then folded to the right, and the sheets being laid on the roof in their place, it is nailed down to the sheeting with flat-headed short copper nails. The right-hand sheet is then folded over the reeve to the right, and the whole beat down flat upon the cartridge paper covering the sheeting, and thus they are fastened and laid in their places, by nailing down the reeve only; and by reason of the oblong holes through them and the reeve, have a little liberty to expand or contract with the heat and cold, without raising themselves up from the sheeting, or tearing themselves or the fastening to pieces. Two other sheets are then fixed together, according to the first and second operations above, and their seam, with the reeve, introduced under the upper ends of the seam of the former, so as to cover down about two inches upon the upper ends of the former sheets; and so far the cartridge paper is allowed to cover the two first sheets. This edge of the paper is dipt in oil, or in turpentine, so far before its application, and thus a body between the sheets is formed impenetrable to wet; and the reeve belonging to the two last sheets is nailed down to the sheeting as before, and the left-hand sheet is turned down to the right. Four sheets are now laid down, with the seam or joint rising to the ridge; and thus the work is continued, both vertically and horizontally, till the roof be covered, the sides and ends of each sheet being alternately each way, undermost and uppermost.

The price for copper, nails, and workmanship, runs at about eight pounds ten shillings per cwt. or two shillings and threepence per foot superficial, exclusive of the lappings; and about two shillings and eightpence per foot upon the whole; which is rather above half as much more as the price of doing it well with lead."

walls are stone, the rooms generally lined with stucco or plaster, instead of wainscot, the floors of stucco, or of six-sided tiles painted brown, or of flag stone, or of marble; if any floors were of wood, they were of oak wood, which is not so inflammable as pine. Carpets prevent the coldness of stone or brick floors offending the feet in winter, and the noise of treading on such floors, overhead, is less inconvenient than on boards. The stairs too, at Paris, are either stone or brick, with only a wooden edge or corner for the step; so that, on the whole, though the Parisians commonly burn wood in their chimnies, a more dangerous kind of fuel than that used here, yet their houses escape extremely well, as there is little in a room that can be consumed by fire except the furniture; whereas in London, perhaps scarcely a year passes in which half a million of property and many lives are not lost by this destructive element. Of late, indeed, they begin here to leave off wainscoting their rooms, and instead of it cover the walls with stucco, often formed into pannels, like wainscot, which, being painted, is very strong and warm. Stone staircases too, with iron rails, grow more and more into fashion here. But stone steps cannot, in some circumstances be fixed; and there, methinks, oak is safer than pine; and I assure you, that in many genteel houses here, both old and new, the stairs and floors are oak, and look extremely well. Perhaps solid oak for the steps would be still safer than boards; and two steps might be cut diagonally out of one piece. Excuse my talking to you on a subject with which you must be so much better acquainted than I am. It is partly to make out a letter, and partly in hope that by turning your attention to the point, some methods of greater security in our future building may be thought of and promoted by you, whose judgment I know has deservedly great weight with our fellow-citizens. For though our town has not hitherto suffered very greatly by fire, yet I am apprehensive that some time or other, by a concurrence of unlucky circumstances, such as dry weather, hard frost, and high winds, a fire then happening may suddenly spread far and wide over our cedar roofs, and do us immense mischief. I am, yours, &c. B. FRANKLIN.

TO GOVERNOR FRANKLIN,[1] NEW JERSEY.

London, August 19, 1772.

In yours of May 14th, you acquaint me with your indisposition, which gave me great concern. The resolution you have taken to use more exercise is extremely proper; and I hope you will steadily perform it. It is of the greatest importance to prevent diseases, since the cure of them by physic is so very precarious. In considering the different kinds of exercise, I have thought that the *quan-*

[1] Dr. Franklin's son, to whom the first part of the Memoirs of his Life is addressed. See Vol. I.

tum of each is to be judged of, not by time or by distance, but by the degree of warmth it produces in the body: thus, when I observe if I am cold when I get into a carriage in a morning, I may ride all day without being warmed by it; that if on horseback my feet are cold, I may ride some hours before they become warm; but if I am ever so cold on foot, I cannot walk an hour briskly, without glowing from head to foot by the quickened circulation; I have been ready to say, (using round numbers without regard to exactness, but merely to make a great difference) that there is more exercise in *one* mile's riding on horseback, than in *five* in a coach; and more in *one* mile's walking on foot, than in *five* on horseback; to which I may add, that there is more in walking *one* mile up and down stairs, than in *five* on a level floor.—The two latter exercises may be had within doors, when the weather discourages going abroad; and the last may be had when one is pinched for time, as containing a great quantity of exercise in a handful of minutes. The dumb bell is another exercise of the latter compendious kind; by the use of it I have in forty swings quickened my pulse from sixty to one hundred beats in a minute, counted by a second watch: and I suppose the warmth generally increases with quickness of pulse.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO MR. ANTHONY BENEZET,[1] PHILADELPHIA.

DEAR FRIEND, *London, August* 22, 1772.

I made a little extract from yours of April 27, of the number of slaves imported and perishing, with some close remarks on the hypocrisy of this country, which encourages such a detestable commerce by laws for promoting the Guinea trade; while it piqued itself on its virtue, love of liberty, and the equity of its courts in setting free a single negro. This was inserted in the *London Chronicle of the 20th of June* last.—I thank you for the Virginia address, which I shall also publish with some remarks. I am glad to hear that the disposition against keeping negroes grows more general in North America. Several pieces have been lately printed here against the practice, and I hope in time it will be taken into consideration and suppressed by the legislature. Your labours have already been attended with great effects: I hope therefore you and your friends will be encouraged to proceed: my hearty wishes of success attend you, being ever, my dear friend,

Yours affectionately, B. FRANKLIN.

[1] An American philanthropist. In 1767, he wrote a Caution to Great Britain and her Colonies, in a short representation of the calamitous state of the enslaved negroes in the British dominions. In 1772, he published Historical Accounts of Guinea; with an Inquiry into the Rise and Progress of the Slave-Trade, its nature and lamentable effects. This amiable man seemed to have nothing else at heart, but

To Dr. Priestley,

Dear Sir, *London, September* 19, 1772.

In the affair of so much importance to you, wherein you ask my advice; I cannot for want of sufficient premises, counsel you *what* to determine; but if you please, I will tell you *how*. When those difficult cases occur, they are difficult chiefly because, while we have them under consideration, all the reasons *pro*, and *con*, are not present to the mind at the same time; but sometimes one set present themselves; and at other times another, the first being out of sight. Hence the various purposes or inclinations that alternately prevail, and the uncertainty that perplexes us. To get over this, my way is, to divide half a sheet of paper by a line into two columns; writing over the one *pro*, and over the other *con:* then during three or four days consideration, I put down under the different heads, short hints of the different motives that at different times occur to me, *for* or *against* the measure. When I have thus got them all together in one view, I endeavour to estimate their respective weights, and where I find two, (one on each side) that seem equal, I strike them both out. If I find a reason *pro* equal to some *two* reasons *con*, I strike out the *three*. If I judge some *two* reasons *con*, equal to some *three* reasons *pro*, I strike out the *five;* and thus proceeding I find at length where the *balance* lies; and if after a day or two of farther consideration, nothing new that is of importance occurs on either side, I come to a determination accordingly. And though the weight of reasons cannot be taken with the precision of algebraic quantities; yet, when each is thus considered separately and comparatively, and the whole lies before me, I think I can judge better, and am less liable to make a rash step; and in fact I have found great advantage from this kind of equation, in what may be called *moral* or *prudential algebra*.

Wishing sincerely that you may determine for the best, I am ever, my dear friend,

Yours most affectionately, B. Franklin.

To Mr. Mather.

Reverend Sir, *London, July* 7, 1773.

By a line of the 4th past, I acknowledged the receipt of your favour of March 18; and sent you with it two pamphlets. I now add another, a spirited address to the Bishops who opposed the dissenters' petition. It is written by a dissenting minister at York. There is preserved at the end of it, a little fugitive piece of mine on the same occasion.

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the good of his fellow-creatures; and the last act of his life was to take from his desk six dollars for a poor widow.

I perused your tracts with pleasure: I see you inherit all the various learning of your famous ancestors, *Cotton* and *Increase Mather*. The father *Increase*, I once heard preach at the Old South Meeting for Mr. Pemberton; and remember his mentioning the death of "that wicked old persecutor of God's people, Lewis the XIV;" of which news had just been received; but which proved premature. I was some years afterwards at his house at the north end on some errand to him, and remember him sitting in an easy chair apparently very old and feeble. But *Cotton* I remember in the vigor of his preaching and usefulness.

You have made the most of your argument, to prove that America might be known to the ancients. There is another discovery of it claimed by the Norwegians, which you have not mentioned, unless it be under the words "of old viewed and observed" page 7. About 25 years since Professor Kalm, a learned Swede, was with us in Pennsylvania. He contended, that America was discovered by their northern people, long before the time of Columbus; which I doubting, he drew up and gave me some time after, a note of those discoveries, which I send you inclosed. It is his own hand-writing, and his own English; very intelligible for the time he had been among us. The circumstances give the account a great appearance of authenticity. And if one may judge by the description of the winter, the country they visited should be southward of New England, supposing no change since that time of the climate. But if it be true as Krantz, I think, and some other historians tell us, that old Greenland, once inhabited and populous, is now rendered uninhabited by ice, it should seem that the almost perpetual northern winter had gained ground to the southward; and if so, perhaps more northern countries might anciently have had vines, than can bear them in these days. B. FRANKLIN.

To SAMUEL DANFORTH, ESQ.

DEAR SIR, *London, July 25, 1773.*

It gave me great pleasure to receive so cheerful an epistle from a friend of half a century's standing, and to see him commencing life a-new in so valuable a son. I hope the young gentleman's patent will be as beneficial to him, as his invention must be to the public.

I see by the papers, that you continue to afford that public your services, which makes me almost ashamed of my resolutions for retirement. But this exile, though an honourable one,[1] is become grievous to me, in so long a separation from my family,

[1] Dr. Franklin was at that time agent for several of the American Colonies, in Great Britain.

friends and country; all which you happily enjoy; and long may you continue to enjoy them. I hope for the great pleasure of once more seeing and conversing with you; and though living on in one's children, as we both may do, is a good thing; I cannot but fancy it might be better to continue living ourselves at the same time. I rejoice therefore, in your kind intentions of including me in the benefits of that inestimable stone, which curing all diseases (even old age itself) will enable us to see the future glorious state of our America, enjoying in full security her own liberties, and offering in her bosom, a participation of them to all the oppressed of other nations. I anticipate the jolly conversation we and twenty more of our friends may have a hundred years hence on this subject; over that well replenished bowl at Cambridge commencement. I am, dear sir, for an age to come, and for ever, with sincere esteem and respect, your most obedient, humble servant, B. FRANKLIN.

TO HIS MOST SERENE HIGHNESS DON GABRIEL OF BOURBON.

On receiving his Version of Sallust.

ILLUSTRIOUS PRINCE, *Philadelphia, December* 12, 1775.

I have just received through the hands of the Ambassador of Spain, the much esteemed present your most Serene Highness hath so kindly sent me, of your excellent version of Sallust.

I am extremely sensible of the honor done me, and beg you would accept my thankful acknowledgments. I wish I could send hence any American literary production worthy of your perusal; but as yet the muses have scarcely visited these remote regions. Perhaps, however, the proceedings of our American Congress, just published, may be a subject of some curiosity at your court. I therefore take the liberty of sending your Highness a copy, with some other papers which contain accounts of the successes wherewith Providence has lately favored us. Therein your wise politicians may contemplate the first efforts of a rising state, which seems likely soon to act a part of some importance on the stage of human affairs, and furnish materials for a future Sallust. I am very old and can scarce hope to see the event of this great contest: but looking forward, I think I see a powerful dominion growing up here, whose interest it will be to form a close and firm alliance with Spain, (their territories bordering) and who being united, will be able, not only to preserve their own people in peace, but to repel the force of all the other powers in Europe. It seems, therefore, prudent on both sides to cultivate a good understanding, that may hereafter be so useful to both; towards which a fair foundation

is already laid in our minds, by the well-founded popular opinion entertained here of Spanish integrity and honour. I hope my presumption in hinting this will be pardoned. If in any thing on this side the globe I can render either service or pleasure to your Royal Highness, your commands will make me happy. With the utmost esteem and veneration, I have the honour to be your Serene Highness's, most obedient, and most humble servant, B. FRANKLIN.

To Dr. Priestley.

DEAR SIR, *Paris, Jan.* 27, 1777.

I received your very kind letter of February last, some time in September. Major Carleton, who was so kind as to forward it to me, had not an opportunity of doing it sooner. I rejoice to hear of your continual progress in those useful discoveries; I find that you have set all the philosophers of Europe at work upon *fixed air;* and it is with great pleasure I observe how high you stand in their opinion; for I enjoy my friends' fame as my own.

The hint you gave me jocularly, that you did not quite despair of the *philosopher's stone*, draws from me a request, that when you have found it, you will take care to lose it again; for I believe in my conscience that mankind are wicked enough to continue slaughtering one another as long as they can find money to pay the butchers. But of all the wars in my time, this on the part of England appears to me the wickedest; having no cause but malice against liberty, and the jealousy of commerce. And I think the crime seems likely to meet with its proper punishment; a total loss of her own liberty, and the destruction of her own commerce.

I suppose you would like to know something of the state of affairs in America. In all probability we shall be much stronger the next campaign than we were in the last; better armed, better disciplined, and with more ammunition. When I was at the camp before Boston, the army had not five rounds of powder a man; this was kept a secret even from our people. The world wondered that we so seldom fired a cannon: we could not afford it; but we now make powder in plenty.

To me it seems, as it has always done, that this war must end in our favor, and in the ruin of Britain, if she does not speedily put an end to it. An English gentleman here the other day, in company with some French, remarked, that it was folly in France not to make war immediately. *And in England*, replied one of them, *not to make peace.*

Do not believe the reports you hear of our internal divisions. We are, I believe, as much united as any people ever were, and as firmly. B. FRANKLIN.

To Mrs. Thompson, at Lisle.

Paris, Feb. 8, 1777.

You are too early, *Hussy*, as well as too saucy, in calling me *Rebel;* you should wait for the event, which will determine whether it is a *rebellion* or only a *revolution.* Here the ladies are more civil; they call us *les Insurgens*, a character that usually pleases them: and methinks all other women who smart, or have smarted under the tyranny of a bad husband, ought to be fixed in *revolution* principles, and act accordingly.

In my way to Canada last spring, I saw dear Mrs. Barrow, at New-York. Mr. Barrow had been from her two or three months to keep Governor Tryon, and other tories company on board the Asia, one of the King's ships which lay in the harbour; and in all that time that naughty man had not ventured once on shore to see her. Our troops were then pouring into the town, and she was packing up to leave it; fearing as she had a large house they would incommode her by quartering officers in it. As she appeared in great perplexity, scarce knowing where to go, I persuaded her to stay; and I went to the general officers then commanding there, and recommended her to their protection; which they promised and performed. On my return from Canada, where I was a piece of a governor (and I think a very good one) for a fortnight, and might have been so 'till this time if your wicked army, enemies to all good government, had not come and driven me out, I found her still in quiet possession of her house. I inquired how our people had behaved to her; she spoke in high terms of the respectful attention they had paid her, and the quiet and security they had procured her. I said I was glad of it; and that if they had used her ill, I would have turned tory. Then, said she, (with that pleasing gaiety so natural to her) *I wish they had.* For you must know she is a *toryess* as well as you, and can as flippantly call *rebel.* I drank tea with her; we talked affectionately of you and our other friends the Wilkes's, of whom she had received no late intelligence; what became of her since, I have not heard. The street she lived in was some months after chiefly burnt down; but as the town was then, and ever since has been, in possession of the King's troops, I have had no opportunity of knowing whether she suffered any loss in the conflagration. I hope she did not, as if she did, I should wish I had not persuaded her to stay there. I am glad to learn from you that that unhappy, though deserving family, the W.'s, are getting into some business that may afford them subsistence. I pray that God will bless them, and that they may see happier days. Mr. Cheap's and Dr. H.'s good fortunes please me. Pray learn, if you have not already learnt, like me, to be pleased with other people's pleasures, and

happy with their happinesses when none occur of your own; then perhaps you will not so soon be weary of the place you chance to be in, and so fond of rambling to get rid of your *ennui*. I fancy you have hit upon the right reason of your being weary of St. Omers, viz. that you are out of temper, which is the effect of full living and idleness. A month in Bridewell, beating hemp upon bread and water, would give you health and spirits, and subsequent chearfulness and contentment, with every other situation. I prescribe that regimen for you, my dear, in pure good will, without a fee. And let me tell you, if you do not get into temper, neither Brussels nor Lisle will suit you. I know nothing of the price of living in either of those places; but I am sure a single woman as you are, might with economy upon two hundred pounds a year, maintain herself comfortably any where; and me into the bargain. Do not invite me in earnest, however, to come and live with you; for being posted here, I ought not to comply, and I am not sure I should be able to refuse. Present my respects to Mrs. Payne, and Mrs. Heathcoat, for though I have not the honor of knowing them, yet as you say they are friends to the American cause, I am sure they must be women of good understanding. I know you wish you could see me, but as you can't, I will describe myself to you. Figure me in your mind as jolly as formerly, and as strong and hearty, only a few years older; very plainly dressed, wearing my thin grey straight hair, that peeps out under my only *coiffure*, a fine fur cap; which comes down my forehead almost to my spectacles. Think how this must appear among the powdered heads of Paris! I wish every lady and gentleman in France would only be so obliging as to follow my fashion, comb their own heads as I do mine, dismiss their *friseurs*, and pay me half the money they paid to them. You see the gentry might well afford this, and I could then enlist these *friseurs*, (who are at least 100,000) and with the money I would maintain them, make a visit with them to England, and dress the heads of your ministers and privy counsellors; which I conceive at present to be *un peu dérangées*. Adieu! madcap; and believe me ever, your affectionate friend, and humble servant, B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. Don't be proud of this long letter. A fit of the gout which has confined me five days, and made me refuse to see company, has given me a little time to trifle; otherwise it would have been very short, visitors and business would have interrupted: and perhaps, with Mrs. Barrow, you wish they had.

To DR. COOPER, BOSTON.

Paris, May 1, 1777.

I thank you for your kind congratulations on my safe arrival

here, and for your good wishes. I am, as you supposed, treated with great civility and respect by all orders of people; but it gives me still greater satisfaction to find that our being here is of some use to our country. On that head I cannot be more explicit at present.

I rejoice with you in the happy change of affairs in America last winter; I hope the same train of success will continue through the summer. Our enemies are disappointed in the number of additional troops they purposed to send over. What they have been able to muster will not probably recruit their army to the state it was in the beginning of last campaign; and ours I hope will be equally numerous, better armed, and better clothed, than they have been heretofore.

All Europe is on our side of the question, as far as applause and good wishes can carry them. Those who live under arbitrary power do nevertheless approve of liberty, and wish for it: they almost despair of recovering it in Europe; they read the translations of our separate colony constitutions with rapture; and there are such numbers every where who talk of removing to America, with their families and fortunes, as soon as peace and our independence shall be established, that it is generally believed we shall have a prodigious addition of strength, wealth, and arts, from the emigrations of Europe; and it is thought that to lessen or prevent such emigrations, the tyrannies established there must relax, and allow more liberty to their people. Hence it is a common observation here, that our cause is *the cause of all mankind;* and that we are fighting for their liberty in defending our own. It is a glorious task assigned us by Providence; which has, I trust, given us spirit and virtue equal to it, and will at last crown it with success.

I am ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately, B. FRANKLIN.

To Mr. Winthrop, Boston.

DEAR SIR, *Paris, May* 1, 1777.

I received your kind letter of February 28, which gave me great pleasure.

I forwarded your letter to Dr. Price, who was well lately, but his friends, on his account, were under some apprehensions from the violence of government, in consequence of his late excellent publications in favour of liberty. I wish all the friends of liberty and man would quit that sink of corruption, and leave it to its fate.

The people of this country are almost unanimously in our favour. The government has its reasons for postponing a war, but is making daily the most diligent preparations; wherein Spain goes hand in hand. In the mean time, America has the

whole harvest of prizes made upon the British commerce; a kind of monopoly that has its advantages, as by affording greater encouragement to cruisers, it increases the number of our seamen, and thereby augments our naval power.

The conduct of those Princes of Germany, who have sold the blood of their people, has subjected them to the contempt and odium of all Europe. The Prince of Anspach, whose recruits mutinied and refused to march, was obliged to disarm, and fetter them, and drive them to the sea-side by the help of his guards; himself attending in person. In his return he was publicly hooted by mobs through every town he passed in Holland, with all sorts of reproachful epithets. The King of Prussia's humour of obliging those Princes to pay him the same toll per head for the men they drive through his dominions, as used to be paid him for their *cattle*, because they were sold as such, is generally spoken of with approbation; as containing a just reproof of those tyrants. I send you inclosed one of the many satires that have appeared on this occasion.

With best wishes of prosperity to yourself and to my dear country, where I hope to spend my last years, and lay my bones,

I am ever, dear Sir, your affectionate friend, and humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

To Mr. Cushing, Boston.

SIR, *Paris, May* 1, 1777.

I thank you for your kind congratulations on my arrival here, and shall be happy in finding that our negociations on this side the water are of effectual service to our country.

The general news here is, that all Europe is arming and preparing for war, as if it were soon expected. Many of the powers however, have their reasons for endeavouring to postpone it, at least a few months longer.

Our enemies will not be able to send against us all the strength they intended: they can procure but few Germans; and their recruiting and impressing at home, goes on but heavily. They threaten, however, and give out, that Lord Howe is to bombard Boston this summer, and Burgoyne, with the troops from Canada, to destroy Providence, and lay waste Connecticut; while Howe marches against Philadelphia. They will do us undoubtedly as much mischief as they can: but the virtue and bravery of our countrymen, will, with the blessing of God, prevent part of what they intend, and nobly bear the rest. This campaign is entered upon with a mixture of rage and despair, as their whole scheme of reducing us depends upon its

success; the wisest of the nation being clear that if this fails, administration will not be able to support another. B. FRANKLIN.

To Mr. Thomas Viny, Tenterden, Kent.

DEAR SIR, *Passy, May* 4, 1779.

I received with great pleasure your kind letter, as I learnt by it that my hospitable friend still exists, and that his friendship for me had not abated.

We have had a hard struggle, but the Almighty has favoured the just cause, and I join most heartily with you in your prayers that he may perfect his work, and establish freedom in the new world, as an asylum for those of the old, who deserve it. I find that many worthy and wealthy families of this continent are determined to remove thither and partake of it, as soon as peace shall make the passage safer; for which peace I also join your prayers most cordially, as I think the war a detestable one; and grieve much at the mischief and misery it occasions to many; my only consolation being that I did all in my power to prevent it.

When all the bustle is over, if my short remainder of life will permit my return thither, what a pleasure will it be to me to see my old friend and his children settled there. I hope he will find vines and figtrees there for all of them, under which we may sit and converse, enjoying peace and plenty, a good government, good laws and liberty, without which men lose half their value.

I am with much esteem, dear friend, yours, &c. B. FRANKLIN.

To Mrs. Wright,[1] London.

DEAR MADAM, *Passy, May* 4, 1779.

I received your favour of the 14th of March past, and if you should continue in your resolution of returning to America, through France, I

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[1] Mrs. Mehetabel Wright, was altogether a very extraordinary woman. She was the niece of the celebrated John Wesley, but was born at Philadelphia, in which city her parents settled at an early period. Mrs. Wright was greatly distinguished as a modeller in wax; which art she turned to a remarkable account in the American war, by coming to England, and exhibiting her performances. This enabled her to procure much intelligence of importance, which she communicated to Dr. Franklin and others, with whom she corresponded during the whole war. As soon as a general was appointed, or a squadron begun to be fitted out, the old lady found means of access to some family where she could gain information, and thus without being at all suspected, she contrived to transmit an account of the number of the troops, and the place of their destination to her political friends abroad. She at one time

shall certainly render you any of the little services in my power: but there are so many difficulties at present in getting passages hence, particularly safe ones for women, that methinks I should advise your stay till more settled times, and, till a more frequent intercourse is established.

As to the exercise of your art here, I am in doubt whether it would answer your expectations. Here are two or three who profess it, and make a show of their works on the Boulevards; but it is not the taste for persons of fashion to sit to these artists for their portraits: and both house-rent and living at Paris is very expensive.

I thought that friendship required I should acquaint you with these circumstances; after which you will use your discretion.

I am, &c. B. FRANKLIN.

[Written in the envelope of the above.]

P.S. My grandson, whom you may remember when a little saucy boy at school being my amanuensis in writing the within letter, has been diverting me with his remarks. He conceives that your figures cannot be packed up, without damage from any thing you could fill the boxes with to keep them steady. He supposes therefore, that you must put them into post-chaises, two and two, which will make a long train upon the road, and be a very expensive conveyance; but as they will eat nothing at the Inns, you may the better afford it. When they come to Dover, he is sure they are so like life and nature, that the master of the packet will not receive them on board without passes; which you will do well therefore to take out from the Secretary's Office, before you leave London; where they will cost you *only* the modest price of two guineas and sixpence each, which you will pay without grumbling, because you are sure the money will never be employed against your country. It will require, he says, five or six of the long wicker French stage coaches to carry them as passengers from Calais to Paris, and a ship with good accommodations to convey them to America; where all the world will wonder at your clemency to Lord N———; that having it in your power to hang, or send him to the lighters, you had generously reprieved him for transportation.

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had frequent access to Buckingham-House; and used, it was said, to speak her sentiments very freely to their Majesties, who were amused with her originality. The great Lord Chatham honoured her with his visits, and she took his likeness which appears in Westminster Abbey. Mrs. Wright died very old in February, 1786.

To Mr. Bridgen, London.

Dear Sir, *Passy, October 2*, 1779.

I received your favor of the 17th past, and the two samples of copper are since come to hand. The metal seems to be very good, and the price reasonable, but I have not yet received the orders necessary to justify my making the purchase proposed. There has indeed been an intention to strike copper coin that may not only be useful as small change, but serve other purposes. Instead of repeating continually upon every halfpenny the dull story that every body knows, (and what it would have been no loss to mankind if nobody had ever known,) that Geo. III. is King of Great Britain, France, and Ireland, &c. &c. To put on one side, some important Proverb of Solomon, some pious moral, prudential or economical precept, the frequent inculcation of which, by seeing it every time one receives a piece of money, might make an impression upon the mind, especially of young persons, and tend to regulate the conduct; such as on some, *The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom;* on others, *Honesty is the best policy;* on others, *He that by the plow would thrive, himself must either hold or drive;* on others, *Keep thy shop, and thy shop will keep thee;* on others, *a penny saved is a penny got;* on others, *He that buys what he has no need of, will soon be forced to sell his necessaries;* on others, *Early to bed, and early to rise, will make a man healthy, wealthy, and wise;* and so on to a great variety. The other side it was proposed to fill with good designs, drawn and engraved by the best artists in France, of all the different species of barbarity with which the English have carried on the war in America, expressing every abominable circumstance of their cruelty and inhumanity, that figures can express, to make an impression on the minds of posterity as strong and durable as that on the copper. This resolution has been a long time forborne, but the late burning of defenceless towns in Connecticut, on the flimsy pretence that the people fired from behind their houses, when it is known to have been premeditated and ordered from England, will probably give the finishing provocation, and may occasion a vast demand for your metal.

I thank you for your kind wishes respecting my health, I return them most cordially fourfold into your own bosom. Adieu. B. Franklin.

To Mr. B. Vaughan.

Dear Sir, *Passy, Nov. 9*, 1779.

I have received several kind letters from you, which I have

not regularly answered. They gave me however great pleasure, as they acquainted me with your welfare, and that of your family, and other friends: and I hope you will continue writing to me as often as you can do it conveniently.

I thank you much for the great care and pains you have taken in regulating and correcting the edition of those papers. Your friendship for me appears in almost every page; and if the preservation of any of them should prove of use to the public, it is to you that the public will owe the obligation. In looking them over, I have noted some faults of impression that hurt the sense, and some other little matters, which you will find all in a sheet under the title of *Errata*. You can best judge whether it may be worth while to add any of them to the errata already printed, or whether it may not be as well to reserve the whole for correction in another edition, if such should ever be. Inclosed I send a more perfect copy of the chapter.[1]

If I should ever recover the pieces that were in the hands of my son, and those I left among my papers in America, I think there may be enough to make three more such volumes, of which a great part would be more interesting.

As to the *time* of publishing, of which you ask my opinion; I am not furnished with any reasons, or ideas of reasons on which to form any opinion. Naturally I should suppose the bookseller to be from experience the best judge, and I should be for leaving it to him.

I did not write the pamphlet you mention. I know nothing of it. I suppose it is the same, concerning which, Doctor Priestley formerly asked me the same question. That for which he took it, was intitled, *A Dissertation on Liberty and Necessity, Pleasure and Pain*, with these lines in the title page.

——— "*Whatever is, is right. But purblind man,*
Sees but a part o' the chain, the nearest link:
His eye not carrying to that equal beam
That poises all above——— ——— *Dryden.*

London: printed MDCCXXV.[2]

I return the manuscripts you were so obliging as to send me; I am concerned at your having no other copies, I hope these will get safe to your hands; I do not remember the Duke de Chartres showing me the letter you mention. I have received Dr. Crawfurd's book, but not your abstract, which I wait for as you desire.

I send you also Mr. Dupont's *Table Economique*, which I think an excellent

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[1] A Parable against Persecution.—See *Papers on Miscellaneous Subjects.*

[2] See a full account of this Pamphlet in *Memoirs of the Life, Vol.* 1. *p.* 45.

thing, as it contains in a clear method all the principles of that new sect, called here *les Economistes.*

Poor Henley's dying in that manner is inconceivable to me. Is any reason given to account for it, besides insanity?

Remember me affectionately to all the good family, and believe me with great esteem, my dear friend, yours, &c. B. FRANKLIN.

To Pe're Beccaria.[1]

DEAR SIR, *Passy, November* 19, 1779.

Having some time since heard of your illness with great concern, it gave me infinite pleasure to learn this day from M. Chantel, (who did me the honor of a visit) that you were so far recovered as to be able to make little excursions on horseback; I pray God that your convalescence may be quick and perfect, and your health be again firmly established: *science* would lose too much in losing one so zealous and active in its cause, and so capable of accelerating its progress and augmenting its dominions.

I find myself here immersed in affairs, which absorb my attention, and prevent my pursuing those studies in which I always found the highest satisfaction: and I am now grown so old as hardly to hope for a return of that leisure and tranquillity so necessary for philosophical disquisitions. I have however, not long since thrown a few thoughts on paper relative to the Aurora Borealis,[2] which I would send you, but that I suppose you may have seen them in the Journal of l'Abbé Rozier. If not, I will make out a copy and send it to you; perhaps with some corrections.

Every thing of your writing is always very welcome to me; if, therefore, you have lately published any new experiments or observations in physics, I shall be happy to see them, when you have an opportunity of sending them to me.

With the highest esteem, respect, and affection, I am, &c. B. FRANKLIN.

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[1] GIOVANNI BATTISBE BECCARIA, a religious of the school of Piety, was a native of Mondovi. His celebrity as a teacher of mathematics and philosophy, first at Palermo, and afterwards at Rome, caused him to be invited to Turin, where he filled the chair of experimental lecturer, and was employed in the tuition of some branches of the Royal Family. His correspondence was sought by men of letters in various countries; and he imparted to Dr. Franklin in particular, many important facts on philosophical subjects. Father Beccaria, died at Turin, in an advanced age, in 1781. His "Dissertations on Electricity," have been published; but the most curious of his pieces is an "Essay on the Cause of Storms and Tempests." [2] See "*papers on Philosophical Subjects.*"

To Dr. Price, London.

Dear Sir, *Passy, February* 6, 1780.

I received but very lately your kind favor of October 14th. Dr. Ingenhousz, who brought it, having staid long in Holland. I sent the enclosed directly to Mr. L. It gave me great pleasure to understand that you continue well. Your writings, after all the abuse you and they have met with, begin to make serious impressions on those who at first rejected the counsels you gave; and they will acquire new weight every day, and be in high esteem when the cavils against them are dead and forgotten. Please to present my affectionate respects to that honest, sensible, and intelligent society,[1] who did me so long the honor of admitting me to share in their instructive conversations. I never think of the hours I so happily spent in that company, without regretting that they are never to be repeated; for I see no prospect of an end to this unhappy war in my time. Dr. Priestley, you tell me, continues his experiments with success. We make daily great improvements in *natural*—There is one I wish to see in *moral* Philosophy; the discovery of a plan that would induce and oblige nations to settle their disputes without first cutting one another's throats. When will human reason be sufficiently improved to see the advantage of this? When will men be convinced that even successful wars at length become misfortunes to those who unjustly commenced them, and who triumphed blindly in their success, not seeing all its consequences. Your great comfort and mine in this war is, that we honestly and faithfully did every thing in our power to prevent it. Adieu, and believe me ever, my dear friend, yours, &c. B. F.

To Dr. Priestley.

Dear Sir, *Passy, February* 8, 1780.

Your kind letter of September 27th, came to hand but very lately, the bearer having staid long in Holland.

I always rejoice to hear of your being still employed in experimental researches into nature, and of the success you meet with. The rapid progress *true* science now makes, occasions my regretting sometimes that I was born so soon: it is impossible to imagine the height to which may be carried in a thousand years, the power of man over matter; we may perhaps learn to deprive large masses of their gravity, and give them absolute levity, for the sake of easy transport. Agriculture may diminish its labour and double its produce: all diseases may by sure means be prevented or cured, (not excepting even that of old age) and our lives lengthened at pleasure even

[1] Supposed to allude to a club at the London Coffee-house.

beyond the antediluvian standard. O that moral science were in as fair a way of improvement, that men would cease to be wolves to one another, and that human beings would at length learn what they now improperly call humanity!

I am glad my little paper on the Aurora Borealis pleased. If it should occasion farther inquiry, and so produce a better hypothesis, it will not be wholly useless.

I am ever, with the greatest and most sincere esteem, dear Sir, &c. B. F.

[*Inclosed in the foregoing Letter; being an answer to a separate paper received from Dr. Priestley.*]

I have considered the situation of that person very attentively; I think that with a little help from the *Moral Algebra*, he might form a better judgment than any other person can form for him. But since my opinion seems to be desired, I give it for continuing to the end of the term, under all the present disagreeable circumstances: the connection will then die a natural death. No reason will be expected to be given for the separation, and of course no offence taken at reasons given, the friendship may still subsist, and in some other way be useful. The time diminishes daily, and is usefully employed. All human situations have their inconveniencies; we *feel* those that we find in the present, and we neither *feel* nor *see* those that exist in another. Hence we make frequent and troublesome changes without amendment, and often for the worse. In my youth I was passenger in a little sloop, descending the River Delaware. There being no wind, we were obliged when the ebb was spent, to cast anchor, and wait for the next. The heat of the sun on the vessel was excessive, the company strangers to me, and not very agreeable. Near the river side I saw what I took to be a pleasant green meadow, in the middle of which was a large shady tree, where it struck my fancy I could sit and read, (having a book in my pocket) and pass the time agreeably till the tide turned; I therefore prevailed with the captain to put me ashore. Being landed, I found the greatest part of my meadow was really a marsh, in crossing which, to come at my tree, I was up to my knees in mire: and I had not placed myself under its shade five minutes before the muskitoes in swarms found me out, attacked my legs, hands, and face, and made my reading and my rest impossible; so that I returned to the beach, and called for the boat to come and take me on board again, where I was obliged to bear the heat I had strove to quit, and also the laugh of the company. Similar cases in the affairs of life have since frequently fallen under my observation.

I have had thoughts of a college for him in America; I know no one who might

be more useful to the public in the institution of youth. But there are possible unpleasantnesses in that situation: it cannot be obtained but by a too hazardous voyage at this time for a family: and the time for experiments would be all otherwise engaged.

To General Washington.

Sir, *Passy, March 5*, 1780.

I received but lately the letter your Excellency did me the honor of writing to me in recommendation of the Marquis de la Fayette. His modesty detained it long in his own hands. We became acquainted however from the time of his arrival at Paris; and his zeal for the honor of our country, his activity in our affairs here, and his firm attachment to our cause, and to you, impressed me with the same regard and esteem for him that your Excellency's letter would have done, had it been immediately delivered to me.

Should peace arrive after another campaign or two, and afford us a little leisure, I should be happy to see your Excellency in Europe, and to accompany you if my age and strength would permit, in visiting some of its ancient and most famous kingdoms. You would on this side the sea, enjoy the great reputation you have acquired, pure and free from those little shades that the jealousy and envy of a man's countrymen and cotemporaries are ever endeavouring to cast over living merit. Here you would know, and enjoy, what posterity will say of Washington. For a thousand leagues have nearly the same effect with a thousand years. The feeble voice of those grovelling passions cannot extend so far either in time or distance. At present I enjoy that pleasure for you: as I frequently hear the old Generals of this martial country (who study the maps of America, and mark upon them all your operations) speak with sincere approbation and great applause of your conduct, and join in giving you the character of one of the greatest captains of the age.

I must soon quit the scene, but you may live to see our country florish, as it will amazingly and rapidly after the war is over. Like a field of young Indian corn, which long fair weather and sunshine had enfeebled and discolored, and which in that weak state, by a thunder gust of violent wind, hail, and rain seemed to be threatened with absolute destruction; yet the storm being past, it recovers fresh verdure, shoots up with double vigor, and delights the eye not of its owner only, but of every observing traveller.

The best wishes that can be formed for your health, honor and happiness, ever attend you, from Yours &c. B. Franklin.

To Miss Georgiana Shipley.[1]

Passy, October 8, 1780.

It is long, very long, my dear friend, since I had the great pleasure of hearing from you, and receiving any of your very pleasing letters. But it is my fault. I have long omitted my part of the correspondence. Those who love to receive letters should write letters. I wish I could safely promise an amendment of that fault. But besides the indolence attending age, and growing upon us with it, my time is engrossed by too much business, and I have too many inducements to postpone doing, what I feel I ought to do for my own sake, and what I can never resolve to omit entirely.

Your translations from Horace, as far as I can judge of poetry and translations, are very good. That of the *Quo quo ruitis* is so suitable to the times, that the conclusion (in your version) seems to threaten like a prophecy; and methinks there is at least some appearance of danger that it may be fulfilled.—I am unhappily an enemy, yet I think there has been enough of blood spilt, and I wish what is left in the veins of that once loved people, may be spared; by a peace solid and everlasting.

It is a great while since I have heard any thing of the *good Bishop.* Strange that so simple a character should sufficiently distinguish one of that sacred body! *Donnez moi de ses Nouvelles.*—I have been sometime flattered with the expectation of seeing the countenance of that most honoured and ever beloved friend, delineated by your pencil. The portrait is said to have been long on the way, but is not yet arrived: nor can I hear where it is.

Indolent as I have confessed myself to be, I could not, you see, miss this good and safe opportunity of sending you a few lines, with my best wishes for your happiness, and that of the whole dear and amiable family in whose sweet society I have spent so many happy hours. Mr. Jones[2] tells me he shall have a pleasure in being the bearer of my letter, of which I make no doubt; I learn from him, that to your drawing, and music, and painting and poetry, and latin, you have added a proficiency in chess; so that you are, as the French say, *remplie de Talens.* May they and you fall to the lot of one that shall duly value them, and love you as much as I do. Adieu. B. Franklin.

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[1] Daughter of Dr. Shipley, Bishop of St. Asaph.

[2] Afterwards Sir William Jones, who married into the Bishop of St. Asaph's family.

To Doctor Price.

Dear Sir, *Passy, October 9*, 1780.

Besides the pleasure of their company, I had the great satisfaction of hearing by your two valuable friends, and learning from your letter, that you enjoy a good state of health. May God continue it as well for the good of mankind as for your comfort. I thank you much for the second edition of your excellent pamphlet: I forwarded that you sent to Mr. Dana, he being in Holland. I wish also to see the piece you have written, (as Mr. Jones tells me) on toleration: I do not expect that your new parliament will be either wiser or honester than the last. All projects to procure an honest one, by place bills, &c. appear to me vain and impracticable. The true cure I imagine is to be found only in rendering all places unprofitable, and the king too poor to give bribes and pensions. 'Till this is done, which can only be by a revolution, and I think you have not virtue enough left to procure one, your nation will always be plundered; and obliged to pay by taxes the plunderers for plundering and ruining. Liberty and virtue therefore join in the call, COME OUT OF HER, MY PEOPLE! I am fully of your opinion respecting religious tests; but though the people of Massachusetts have not in their new constitution kept quite clear of them; yet if we consider what that people were one hundred years ago, we must allow they have gone greater lengths in liberality of sentiment, on religious subjects: and we may hope for greater degrees of perfection when their constitution some years hence shall be revised. If Christian preachers had continued to teach as Christ and his apostles did, without salaries, and as the Quakers now do, I imagine tests would never have existed: for I think they were invented not so much to secure religion itself, as the emoluments of it. When a religion is good, I conceive that it will support itself; and when it cannot support itself, and God does not take care to support it, so that its professors are obliged to call for the help of the civil power, 'tis a sign, I apprehend, of its being a bad one. But I shall be out of my depth if I wade any deeper in theology, and I will not trouble you with politics, nor with news which are almost as uncertain: but conclude with a heartfelt wish to embrace you once more, and enjoy your sweet society in peace, among our honest, worthy, ingenious friends at the *London*. Adieu, &c.

B. Franklin.

To M. Court de Gebelin,[1] *Paris.*

Dear Sir, *Passy, May* 7, 1781.

I am glad the little book[2] proved acceptable. It does not appear to me intended for a grammar to teach the language: It is rather what we call in English a *spelling-book*, in which the only method observed, is, to arrange the words according to their number of syllables, placing those of one syllable together, then those of two syllables, and so on. And it is to be observed, that *Sa ki ma*, for instance, is not three words, but one word of three syllables; and the reason that *hyphens* are not placed between the syllables is, that the printer had not enough of them.

As the Indians had no letters, they had no orthography. The Delaware language being differently spelt from the Virginian, may not always arise from a difference in the languages; for strangers who learn the language of an Indian nation, finding no orthography, are at liberty in writing the language to use such compositions of letters as they think will best produce the sounds of the words. I have observed that our Europeans of different nations, who learn the same Indian language, form each his own orthography according to the usual sounds given to the letters in his own language. Thus the same words of the Mohock language written by an English, a French, and a German interpreter, often differ very much in the spelling; and without knowing the usual powers of the letters in the language of the interpreter, one cannot come at the pronunciation of the Indian words. The spelling-book in question was, I think, written by a German.

You mention a Virginian Bible. Is it not the Bible of the Massachusetts language, translated by Elliot, and printed in New England, about the middle of the last century? I know this Bible, but have never heard of one in the Virginian language. Your observations of the similitude between many of the words, and those of the ancient world, are indeed very curious.

The inscription which you find to be Phenician, is, I think, near *Taunton* (not

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[1] Antoine Court de Gebelin, born at Nismes, in 1725, of a Protestant family, became a minister in that communion, first in the Cevennes, and next at Lausanne; which however he quitted, together with the clerical function, for the profession of literature at Paris, where he acquired so great a reputation as an antiquary and philologer, that he was appointed to superintend one of the museums. He lost much of his reputation, however, by his enthusiastic zeal in favour of animal magnetism. He died at Paris, May 13, 1784. His great work is entitled, "Monde Primitif, analysé et comparé avec le Monde Moderne," 9 tom. 4to. The excellence of his character may be appreciated from the single fact, that on quitting Switzerland, he voluntarily gave to his sister the principal part of his patrimony, reserving little for himself, and depending for a maintenance upon the exercise of his talents.

[2] A Vocabulary of the Language of one of the Indian tribes in North America.

Jannston, as you write it). There is some account of it in the old Philosophical Transactions; I have never been at the place, but shall be glad to see your remarks on it.

The compass appears to have been long known in China, before it was known in Europe; unless we suppose it known to Homer, who makes the Prince, that lent ships to Ulysses, boast that they had *a spirit* in them by whose directions they could find their way in a cloudy day, or the darkest night. If any Phenicians arrived in America, I should rather think it was not by the accident of a storm, but in the course of their long and adventurous voyages; and that they coasted from Denmark and Norway, over to Greenland, and down southward by Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, &c. to New England; as the Danes themselves certainly did some ages before Columbus.

Our new American society will be happy in the correspondence you mention, and when it is possible for me, I shall be glad to attend the meetings of your society, which I am sure must be very instructive. With great and sincere esteem, I have the honour to be, &c. B. FRANKLIN.

To EDMUND BURKE, Esq. M.P.

SIR, *Passy, Oct. 15, 1781.*

I received but a few days since your very friendly letter of August last, on the subject of General Burgoyne.

Since the foolish part of mankind will make wars from time to time with each other, not having sense enough otherwise to settle their differences, it certainly becomes the wiser part, who cannot prevent those wars, to alleviate as much as possible the calamities attending them. Mr. Burke always stood high in my esteem; but his affectionate concern for his friend renders him still more amiable, and makes the honour he does me of admitting me of the number, still more precious.

I do not think the Congress have any wish to persecute General Burgoyne. I never heard till I received your letter that they had recalled him; if they have made such a resolution, it must be, I suppose, a conditional one, to take place in case their offer of exchanging him for Mr. Laurens should not be accepted; a resolution intended merely to enforce that offer.

I have just received an authentic copy of the resolve containing that offer; and authorising me to make it. As I have no communication with your ministers, I send it inclosed to you.[1] If you can find any means of negociating this business, I am

[1] Wanting.

sure the restoring another worthy man to his family and friends, will be an addition to your pleasure. With great and invariable respect and affection, I am, Sir, your most obedient, and most humble servant, B. FRANKLIN.

To His Excellency, General Washington.

SIR, *Passy, April 2*, 1782.

I received duly the honor of your letter, accompanying the capitulation of Gen. Cornwallis. All the world agree that no expedition was ever better planned or better executed; it has made a great addition to the military reputation you had already acquired, and brightens the glory that surrounds your name, and that must accompany it to our latest posterity. No news could possibly make me more happy. The infant Hercules has now strangled the two serpents that attacked him in his cradle, and I trust his future history will be answerable.

This will be presented to you by the Count de Segur. He is son of the Marquis de Segur, Minister of War, and our very good friend: but I need not claim your regards to the young gentleman on that score; his amiable personal qualities, his very sensible conversation, and his zeal for the cause of liberty, will obtain and secure your esteem, and be better recommendation than any I can give him.

The English seem not to know either how to continue the war, or to make peace with us. Instead of entering into a regular treaty, for putting an end to a contest they are tired of, they have voted in Parliament, that the recovery of America by force is impracticable, that an offensive war against us ought not to be continued, and that whoever advises it shall be deemed an enemy to his country.

Thus the garrisons of New-York, and Charlestown, if continued there, must sit still, being only allowed to defend themselves. The ministry not understanding or approving this making of peace by halves, have quitted their places, but we have no certain account here who is to succeed them, so that the measures likely to be taken are yet uncertain; probably we shall know something of them before the Marquis de la Fayette takes his departure. There are grounds for good hopes however; but I think we should not therefore relax in our preparations for a vigorous campaign, as that nation is subject to sudden fluctuations; and though somewhat humiliated at present, a little success in the West Indies may dissipate their present fears, recal their natural insolence, and occasion the interruption of negotiation, and a continuance of the war. We have great stores purchased here for the use of your army, which will be sent as soon as transports can be procured for them to go under good convoy.

My best wishes always have, and always will attend you, being with the greatest and most sincere esteem and respect, Sir, your Excellency's most obedient, and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

TO THE REV. DR. PRIESTLEY.

DEAR SIR, *Passy, June 7, 1782.*

I received your kind letter of the 7th of April, also one of the 3d of May. I have always great pleasure in hearing from you, in learning that you are well, and that you continue your experiments. I should rejoice much if I could once more recover the leisure to search with you into the works of nature; I mean the inanimate, not the animate or moral part of them: the more I discovered of the former, the more I admired them; the more I know of the latter, the more I am disgusted with them. Men, I find to be a sort of beings very badly constructed, as they are generally more easily provoked than reconciled, more disposed to do mischief to each other than to make reparation, much more easily deceived than undeceived, and having more pride and even pleasure in killing than in begetting one another; for without a blush they assemble in great armies at noon-day to destroy, and when they have killed as many as they can, they exaggerate the number to augment the fancied glory; but they creep into corners, or cover themselves with the darkness of night when they mean to beget, as being ashamed of a virtuous action. A virtuous action it would be, and a vicious one the killing of them, if the species were really worth producing or preserving; but of this I begin to doubt. I know you have no such doubts, because in your zeal for their welfare, you are taking a great deal of pains to save their souls. Perhaps as you grow older, you may look upon this as a hopeless project, or an idle amusement, repent of having murdered in mephitic air so many honest, harmless mice, and wish that to prevent mischief you had used boys and girls instead of them. In what light we are viewed by superior beings, may be gathered from a piece of late West-India news, which possibly has not yet reached you. A young angel of distinction being sent down to this world on some business, for the first time, had an old courier-spirit assigned him as a guide; they arrived over the seas of Martinico, in the middle of the long day of obstinate fight between the fleets of Rodney, and De Grasse. When through the clouds of smoke, he saw the fire of the guns, the decks covered with mangled limbs, and bodies dead or dying, the ships sinking, burning, or blown into the air, and the quantity of pain, misery, and destruction, the crews yet alive were thus with so much eagerness dealing round to one another; he turned angrily to his guide, and said,

you blundering blockhead, you are ignorant of your business; you undertook to conduct me to the earth, and you have brought me into hell! No, Sir, says the guide, I have made no mistake; this is really the earth, and these are men. Devils never treat one another in this cruel manner; they have more sense, and more of what men (vainly) call humanity.

But to be serious, my dear old friend, I love you as much as ever, and I love all the honest souls that meet at the London Coffee-House. I only wonder how it happened that they and my other friends in England, came to be such good creatures in the midst of so perverse a generation. I long to see them and you once more, and I labour for peace with more earnestness, that I may again be happy in your sweet society.

I showed your letter to the Duke de la Rochefoucault, who thinks with me that the new experiments you have made are extremely curious, and he has given me thereupon a note which I inclose, and I request you would furnish me with the answer desired.

Yesterday the *Count du Nord*[1] was at the Academy of Sciences, when sundry experiments were exhibited for his entertainment; among them, one by M. Lavoisier, to show that the strongest fire we yet know is made in a charcoal blown upon with dephlogisticated air. In a heat so produced, he melted platina presently, the fire being much more powerful than that of the strongest burning mirror. Adieu, and believe me ever, yours most affectionately, B. FRANKLIN.

To DR. SHIPLEY, BISHOP OF ST. ASAPH.[2]

Passy, June 10, 1782.

I received and read the letter from my dear and much respected friend, with infinite pleasure. After so long a silence, and the long continuance of its unfortunate causes, a line from you was a prognostic of happier times approaching, when we may converse and communicate freely, without danger from the malevolance of men enraged by the ill success of their distracted projects.

I long with you for the return of peace, on the general principles of humanity.

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[1] The Grand Duke of Russia, afterwards Emperor, Paul I.

[2] JONATHAN SHIPLEY took his degrees at Christ Church, and in 1743, was made Prebendary of Winchester. After travelling in 1745, with the Duke of Cumberland, he was promoted in 1749 to a Canonry at Christ Church, became Dean of Winchester in 1760, and in 1769, Bishop of St. Asaph. He was author of some elegant verses on the death of Queen Caroline, and published besides, some poems and sermons, and died 1788.

The hope of being able to pass a few more of my last days happily in the sweet conversations and company I once enjoyed at Twyford,[1] is a particular motive that adds strength to the general wish, and quickens my industry to procure that best of blessings. After much occasion to consider the folly and mischiefs of a state of warfare, and the little or no advantage obtained even by those nations who have conducted it with the most success; I have been apt to think that there has never been, nor ever will be any such thing as a *good* war, or a *bad* peace.

You ask if I still relish my old studies? I relish them, but I cannot pursue them. My time is engrossed unhappily with other concerns. I requested of the Congress last year, my discharge from this public station, that I might enjoy a little leisure in the evening of a long life of business: but it was refused me, and I have been obliged to drudge on a little longer.

You are happy as your years come on, in having that dear and most amiable family about you. Four daughters! how rich! I have but one, and she, necessarily detained from me at a thousand leagues distance. I feel the want of that tender care of me which might be expected from a daughter, and would give the world for one. Your shades are all placed in a row over my fire-place, so that I not only have you always in my mind, but constantly before my eyes.

The cause of liberty and America, has been greatly obliged to you. I hope you will live long to see that country flourish under its new constitution, which I am sure will give you great pleasure. Will you permit me to express another hope, that now your friends are in power, they will take the first opportunity of showing the sense they ought to have of your virtues and your merit?

Please to make my best respects acceptable to Mrs. Shipley, and embrace for me tenderly all our dear children. With the utmost esteem, respect, and veneration, I am ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately, B. FRANKLIN.

To Dr. Ingenhausz.[2]

Passy, June 21, 1782.

I am sorry that any misunderstanding should arise between you and Dr. ———. The indiscretions of friends on both sides, often occasion such misunderstandings. When they produce public altercations, the ignorant are diverted at the expence of the learned. I hope therefore, that you will omit the polemic piece in your French edition, and take no public notice of the improper behaviour of

[1] The country residence of the Bishop.

[2] John Ingenhausz, F.R.S. an eminent physician and chemist, born at Breda, 1730, died in 1799.

your friend; but go on with your excellent experiments, produce facts, improve science, and do good to mankind. Reputation will follow, and the little injustices of cotemporary labourers will be forgotten; my example may encourage you, or else I should not mention it. You know that when my papers were first published, the Abbé Nollet, then high in reputation, attacked them in a book of letters. An answer was expected from me, but I made none, to that book nor to any other. They are now all neglected, and the truth seems to be established: you can always employ your time better than in polemics.

Monsieur Lavoisier, the other day showed an experiment at the Academy of Sciences, to the *Comte du Nord*, that is said to be curious. He kindled an hollow charcoal, and blew into it a stream of dephlogisticated air. In this focus, which is said to be the hottest fire human art has yet been able to produce, he melted platina in a few minutes.

Our American affairs wear a better aspect now than at any time heretofore. Our councils are perfectly united; our people all armed and disciplined. Much and frequent service as militia has indeed made them all soldiers. Our enemies are much diminished, and reduced to two or three garrisons; our commerce and agriculture flourish. England at length sees the difficulty of conquering us, and no longer demands submission, but asks for peace. She would now think herself happy to obtain a federal union with us, and will endeavour it; but perhaps will be disappointed, as it is the interest of all Europe to prevent it. I last year requested of Congress to release me from this service, that I might spend the evening of life more agreeably in philosophic leisure; but I was refused. If I had succeeded, it was my intention to make the tour of Italy, with my grandson, pass into Germany, and spend some time happily with you whom I have always loved, ever since I knew you, with uninterrupted affection. We have lost our common friend, the excellent Pringle![1] How many pleasing hours you and I have passed together in his company! I must soon follow him, being now in my seventy-seventh year; but you have yet a prospect of many years of usefulness still before you, which I hope you will fully enjoy; and I am persuaded you will ever kindly remember your truly affectionate friend, B. F.

To Miss Alexander.

Passy, June 24, 1782.

I am not at all displeased that the thesis and dedication with

[1] Sir John Pringle, Bart. born in Roxburghshire, in 1707, Physician to the Queen's household, afterwards to the King, and President of the Royal Society; died in 1782. He wrote "*Observations on Diseases of the Army*," &c. &c.

which we were threatened are blown over, for I dislike much all sorts of mummery. The republic of letters has gained no reputation, whatever else it may have gained, by the commerce of dedications; I never made one, and I never desired that one should be made to me. When I submitted to receive this, it was from the bad habit I have long had of doing every thing that ladies desire me to do: there is no refusing any thing to Madame la Marck, nor to you. I have been to pay my respects to that amiable lady, not merely because it was a compliment due to her, but because I love her; which induces me to excuse her not letting me in; the same reason I should have for excusing your faults, if you had any. I have not seen your papa since the receipt of your pleasing letter, so could arrange nothing with him respecting the carriage. During seven or eight days, I shall be very busy: after that you shall hear from me, and the carriage shall be at your service. How could you think of writing to me about chimneys and fires, in such weather as this! Now is the time for the frugal lady you mention to save her wood, obtain *plus de chaleur*, and lay it up against winter, as people do ice against summer. Frugality is an enriching virtue; a virtue I never could acquire in myself: but I was once lucky enough to find it in a wife, who thereby became a fortune to me. Do you possess it? If you do, and I were twenty years younger, I would give your father one thousand guineas for you. I know you would be worth more to me as a *menagére*, but I am covetous and love good bargains. Adieu, my dear friend, and believe me ever, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

To MR. HUTTON.[1]

MY OLD AND DEAR FRIEND, *Passy, July* 7, 1782.

A letter written by you to M. Bertin, Ministre d'Etat, contain-

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[1] JAMES HUTTON, son of Doctor Hutton, (who in the early part of his life had been a bookseller) was for many years Secretary to the Society of Moravians. He died April 25, 1795, in his 80th year, at Oxstead Cottage, Surrey; and was buried in the Moravian cemetry at Chelsea. He was a well known character, and very generally esteemed. He was a faithful brother of the Moravian fraternity fifty-five years; the latter part of his life was spent literally in going about doing good, and his charities were confined to no sect. He married a lady of the Moravian nation and religion, but had no children, and was a widower some years before his death. Mr. Hutton possessed strong sense, with quick feelings and apprehensions, which the illumination of his countenance evinced even at seventy, though his difficulty of hearing was such, that he could only converse by the assistance of an ear-trumpet. He was highly esteemed by their present Majesties, and well known to many of the nobility and men of letters: nor was he refused admittance to the highest ranks, (even at Buckingham-House) though his ardent benevolence inclined him greatly to neglect his own dress, that he might the better feed the hungry and cover the naked.

ing an account of the abominable murders committed by some of the frontier people on the poor Moravian Indians, has given me infinite pain and vexation. The dispensations of Providence in this world puzzle my weak reason; I cannot comprehend why cruel men should have been permitted thus to destroy their fellow-creatures. Some of the Indians may be supposed to have committed sins, but one cannot think the little children had committed any worthy of death. Why has a single man in England, who happens to love blood, and to hate Americans, been permitted to gratify that bad temper by hiring German murderers, and joining them with his own, to destroy in a continued course of bloody years, near 100,000 human creatures, many of them possessed of useful talents, virtues, and abilities, to which he has no pretension! It is he who has furnished the savages with hatchets and scalping knives, and engages them to fall upon our defenceless farmers, and murder them with their wives and children, paying for their scalps, of which the account kept in America, already amounts, as I have heard, to near *two thousand!* Perhaps the people of the frontiers, exasperated by the cruelties of the Indians, have been induced to kill all Indians that fall into their hands without distinction; so that even these horrid murders of our poor Moravians may be laid to his charge. And yet this man lives, enjoys all the good things this world can afford, and is surrounded by flatterers, who keep even his conscience quiet by telling him he is the best of Princes! I wonder at this, but I cannot therefore part with the comfortable belief of a Divine Providence; and the more I see the impossibility, from the number and extent of his crimes, of giving equivalent punishment to a wicked man in this life, the more I am convinced of a future state, in which all that here appears to be wrong shall be set right, all that is crooked made straight. In this faith let you and I, my dear friend, comfort ourselves; it is the only comfort in the present dark scene of things that is allowed us.

I shall not fail to write to the Government of America, urging that effectual care may be taken to protect and save the remainder of those unhappy people.

Since writing the above, I have received a Philadelphia paper, containing some account of the same horrid transaction, a little different, and some circumstances alledged as excuses or palliations, but extremely weak and insufficient. I send it to you inclosed. With great and sincere esteem, I am ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

To Sir Joseph Banks, *President of the Royal Society, London.*

Dear Sir, *Passy, Sept. 9, 1782.*

I have just received the very kind, friendly letter you were so good as to write to me by Dr. Broussonnet. Be assured that I long earnestly for a return of those peaceful times, when I could sit down in sweet society with my English philosophical friends, communicating to each other new discoveries, and proposing improvements of old ones; all tending to extend the power of man over matter, avert or diminish the evils he is subject to, or augment the number of his enjoyments. Much more happy should I be thus employed in your most desirable company, than in that of all the grandees of the earth projecting plans of mischief, however necessary they may be supposed for obtaining greater good.

I am glad to learn by the Doctor that your great work goes on. I admire your magnanimity in the undertaking, and the perseverance with which you have prosecuted it.

I join with you most perfectly in the charming wish you so well express, "that such measures may be taken by both parties as may tend to the elevation of both, rather than the destruction of either." If any thing has happened endangering one of them, my comfort is, that I endeavoured earnestly to prevent it, and gave honest, faithful advice, which if it had been regarded would have been effectual. And still, if proper means are used to produce, not only a peace, but what is much more interesting, a thorough reconciliation; a few years may heal the wounds that have been made in our happiness, and produce a degree of prosperity of which at present we can hardly form a conception. With great and sincere esteem and respect, I am, dear Sir, your most obedient, and most humble servant, B. Franklin.

To Mr. F. Hopkinson, Philadelphia.

Passy, Dec. 24, 1782.

I thank you for your ingenious paper in favor of the trees. I own I now wish we had two rows of them in every one of our streets. The comfortable shelter they would afford us when walking, from our burning summer suns, and the greater coolness of our walls and pavements, would, I conceive, in the improved health of the inhabitants amply compensate the loss of a house now and then by fire, if such should be the consequence: but a tree is soon felled; and as axes are at hand in every neighbourhood, may be down before the engines arrive.

You do well to avoid being concerned in the pieces of personal abuse, so scan-

dalously common in our newspapers, that I am afraid to lend any of them here, 'till I have examined and laid aside such as would disgrace us; and subject us among strangers to a reflection like that used by a gentleman in a Coffee-house to two quarrellers, who after a mutually free use of the words, rogue, villain, rascal, scoundrel, &c. seemed as if they would refer their dispute to him: I know nothing of you, or your affairs, said he; I only perceive *that you know one another.*

The conductor of a newspaper, should, methinks, consider himself as in some degree the guardian of his country's reputation, and refuse to insert such writings as may hurt it. If people will print their abuses of one another, let them do it in little pamphlets, and distribute them where they think proper. It is absurd to trouble all the world with them; and unjust to subscribers in distant places, to stuff their paper with matters so unprofitable and so disagreeable. With sincere esteem and affection, I am, my dear friend, ever yours, B. FRANKLIN.

TO THE RIGHT HON. EARL OF BUCHAN.

MY LORD, *Passy, March* 17, 1783.

I received the letter your Lordship did me the honor of writing to me, and am obliged by your kind congratulations on the return of peace, which I hope will be lasting.

With regard to the terms on which lands may be acquired in America, and the manner of beginning new settlements on them, I cannot give better information than may be found in a book lately printed in London, under some such title as *Letters from a Pensylvanian Farmer*, by Hector St. John. The only encouragements we hold out to strangers are, a good climate, fertile soil, wholesome air and water, plenty of provisions and fuel, good pay for labour, kind neighbours, good laws, liberty, and a hearty welcome: the rest depends on a man's own industry and virtue. Lands are cheap, but they must be bought. All settlements are undertaken at private expence: the public contributes nothing but defence and justice. I should not however expect much emigration from a country so much drained of men as yours[1] must have been by the late war; since the more have left it, the more room, and the more encouragement remains for those who staid at home. But this you can best judge of; and I have long observed of your people, that their sobriety, frugality, industry, and honesty, seldom fail of success in America, and of procuring them a good establishment among us.

I do not recollect the circumstance you are pleased to mention of my having saved a citizen at St. Andrew, by giving a turn to his disorder; and I am curious to know

[1] Scotland.

what the disorder was, and what the advice I gave which proved so salutary.[1] With great regard I have the honour to be, my Lord, your Lordship's most obedient and most humble servant, B. FRANKLIN.

To MRS. HEWSON.[2]

Passy, January 27, 1783.

The departure of my dearest friend,[3] which I learn from your last letter greatly affects me. To meet with her once more in this life was one of the principal motives of my proposing to visit England again before my return to America. The last year carried off my friends Dr. Pringle and Dr. Fothergill, and Lord Kaimes and Lord Le Despencer; this has begun to take away the rest, and strikes the hardest. Thus the ties I had to that country, and indeed to the world in general, are loosened one by one; and I shall soon have no attachment left to make me unwilling to follow.

I intended writing when I sent the eleven books, but lost the time in looking for the first. I wrote with that; and hope it came to hand. I therein asked your counsel about my coming to England: on reflection, I think I can from my knowledge of your prudence foresee what it will be; viz. not to come too soon, lest it should seem braving and insulting some who ought to be respected. I shall therefore omit that journey till I am near going to America, and then just step over to take leave of my friends, and spend a few days with you. I purpose bringing Ben[4] with me, and perhaps may leave him under your care.

At length we are in peace, God be praised; and long, very long may it continue. All wars are follies, very expensive and very mischievous ones: when will mankind be convinced of this, and agree to settle their differences by arbitration? were they to do it even by the cast of a dye, it would be better than by fighting and destroying each other.

Spring is coming on when travelling will be delightful. Can you not, when your children are all at school, make a little party and take a trip hither? I have now a large house, delightfully situated, in which I could accommodate you and two or three friends; and I am but half an hour's drive from Paris.

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[1] It was a fever in which the Earl of Buchan, then Lord Cadross, lay sick at St. Andrew's; and the advice was, not to blister, according to the old practice and the opinion of the learned Dr. Simson, brother of the celebrated geometrician at Glasgow.

[2] Widow of the eminent anatomist of that name, and formerly MISS STEVENSON, to whom several of Dr. Franklin's letters on Philosophical subjects are addressed.

[3] Refers to Mrs. Hewson's mother.

[4] Benjamin Franklin Bache, a grandson of Dr. Franklin, by his daughter.

In looking forward, twenty-five years seems a long period; but in looking back, how short! could you imagine that 'tis now full a quarter of a century since we were first acquainted! it was in 1757. During the greatest part of the time I lived in the same house with my dear deceased friend your mother; of course you and I saw and conversed with each other much and often. It is to all our honors, that in all that time we never had among us the smallest misunderstanding. Our friendship has been all clear sunshine, without any the least cloud in its hemisphere. Let me conclude by saying to you what I have had too frequent occasions to say to my other remaining old friends, *the fewer we become, the more let us love one another.* Adieu &c. B. FRANKLIN.

To THE LORD BISHOP OF ST. ASAPH, (Dr. Shipley.)

Passy, March 17, 1783.

I received with great pleasure my dear and respected friend's letter of the 5th instant, as it informed me of the welfare of a family I so much esteem and love.

The clamor against the peace in your parliament would alarm me for its duration, if I were not of opinion with you, that the attack is rather against the minister. I am confident none of the opposition would have made a better peace for England if they had been in his place; at least I am sure that Lord Stormont who seems loudest in railing at it, is not the man that could have mended it. My reasons I will give you when I have what I hope to have, the great happiness of seeing you once more, and conversing with you. They talk much of there being no reciprocity in our treaty: they think nothing then of our passing over in silence the atrocities committed by their troops and demanding no satisfaction for their wanton burnings and devastations of our fair towns and countries. They have heretofore confest the war to be unjust, and nothing is plainer in reasoning than that the mischiefs done in an unjust war should be repaired. Can Englishmen be so partial to themselves, as to imagine they have a right to plunder and destroy as much as they please, and then without satisfying for the injuries they have done, to have peace on equal terms? We were favorable, and did not demand what justice entitled us to. We shall probably be blamed for it by our constituents: and I still think it would be the interest of England voluntarily to offer reparation of those injuries, and effect it as much as may be in her power. But this is an interest she will never see.

Let us now forgive and forget. Let each country seek its advancement in its

own internal advantages of arts and agriculture, not in retarding or preventing the prosperity of the other. America will, with God's blessing, become a great and happy country; and England, if she has at length gained wisdom, will have gained something more valuable, and more essential to her prosperity, than all she has lost; and will still be a great and respectable nation. Her great disease at present is the number and enormous salaries and emoluments of office. Avarice and ambition are strong passions, and separately act with great force on the human mind; but when both are united and may be gratified in the same object, their violence is almost irresistible, and they hurry men headlong into factions and contentions destructive of all good government. As long therefore as these great emoluments subsist, your parliament will be a stormy sea, and your public counsels confounded by private interests. But it requires much public spirit and virtue to abolish them; more perhaps than can now be found in a nation so long corrupted. B. F.

To Sir Joseph Banks.

Dear Sir, *Passy July* 27, 1783.

I received your very kind letter by Dr. Blagden, and esteem myself much honored by your friendly remembrance. I have been too much and too closely engaged in public affairs since his being here, to enjoy all the benefit of his conversation you were so good as to intend me. I hope soon to have more leisure, and to spend a part of it in those studies that are much more agreeable to me than political operations.

I join with you most cordially in rejoicing at the return of peace. I hope it will be lasting, and that mankind will at length, as they call themselves reasonable creatures, have reason and sense enough to settle their differences without cutting throats: for in my opinion *there never was a good war, or a bad peace.* What vast additions to the conveniences and comforts of living might mankind have acquired, if the money spent in wars had been employed in works of public utility. What an extension of agriculture even to the tops of our mountains; what rivers rendered navigable, or joined by canals; what bridges, aqueducts, new roads and other public works, edifices and improvements, rendering England a compleat paradise, might not have been obtained by spending those millions in doing good which in the last war have been spent in doing mischief; in bringing misery into thousands of families, and destroying the lives of so many thousands of working people, who might have performed the useful labour!

I am pleased with the late astronomical discoveries made by our Society.

Furnished as all Europe now is with academies of science, with nice instruments and the spirit of experiment, the progress of human knowledge will be rapid and discoveries made of which we have at present no conception. I begin to be almost sorry I was born so soon, since I cannot have the happiness of knowing what will be known one hundred years hence.

I wish continued success to the labours of the Royal Society, and that you may long adorn their chair; being with the highest esteem, Dear Sir &c. B. F.

Dr. Blagden will acquaint you with the experiment of a vast globe sent up into the air, much talked of here and which if prosecuted may furnish means of new knowledge.

To Brand Hollis Esq.

Sir, *Passy, near Paris, October 5,* 1783.

I received but lately (though sent in June) your most valuable present of the Memoirs of Thomas Hollis Esq. who was truly as you describe him in your letter, a good "citizen of the world and a faithful friend of America." America too is extremely sensible of his benevolence and great beneficence towards her, and will ever revere his memory. These volumes are a proof of what I have sometimes had occasion to say, in encouraging people to undertake difficult public services, that it is prodigious the quantity of good that may be done by one man, *if he will make a business of it.* It is equally surprizing to think of the very little that is done by many; for such is the general frivolity of the employments and amusements of the rank we call *gentlemen,* that every century may have seen three successions of a set of a thousand each, in every kingdom of Europe, (gentlemen too, of equal or superior fortune) no one of which set in the course of their lives have done the good effected by this man alone! Good, not only to his own nation, and to his cotemporaries, but to distant countries, and to late posterity: for such must be the effect of his multiplying and distributing copies of the works of our best English writers, on subjects the most important to the welfare of society.

I knew him personally but little. I sometimes met with him at the Royal Society and the Society of Arts, but he appeared shy of my acquaintance, though he often sent me valuable presents, such as Hamilton's works, Sydney's works, &c. which are now among the most precious ornaments of my library. We might possibly, if we had been more intimate, have concerted some useful operations together; but he loved to do his good alone and secretly, and I find besides, in perusing these memoirs, that I was a doubtful character with him. I do not respect him less for

his error; and I am obliged to the editors for the justice they have done me. They have made a little mistake in page 400 where a letter which appeared in a London paper, January 7th 1768, is said to have been written by Mr. Adams. It was written by me, and is reprinted in Mr. Vaughan's collection of my political pieces, p. 231. This erratum is of no great importance, but may be corrected in a future edition.

I see Mr. Hollis had a collection of curious medals. If he had been still living, I should certainly have sent him one of the medals that I have caused to be struck here. I think the countenance of my *Liberty* would have pleased him. I suppose you possess the collection, and have the same taste. I beg you therefore to accept of one of these medals as a mark of my respect, and believe me to be with sincere esteem &c. B. FRANKLIN.

To His Excellency John Jay, Esq.

DEAR SIR, *Passy, January 6,* 1784.

I received your kind letter of the 26th past and immediately sent the inclosed to Mrs. Jay whom I saw a few days since with the children, all perfectly well. It is a happy thing that the little ones are so finely past the small pox and I congratulate you upon it most cordially.

It is true as you have heard, that I have the stone, but not that I have had thoughts of being cut for it. It is as yet very tolerable. It gives me no pain but when in a carriage on the pavement, or when I make some sudden quick movement. If I can prevent its growing larger which I hope to do by abstemious living and gentle exercise, I can go on pretty comfortably with it to the end of my journey, which can now be at no great distance. I am cheerful, enjoy the company of my friends, sleep well, have sufficient appetite, and my stomach performs well its functions. The latter is very material to the preservation of health. I therefore take no drugs lest I should disorder it. You may judge that my disease is not very grievous since I am more afraid of the medicines than of the malady.

It gives me pleasure to learn from you that my friends still retain their regard for me. I long to see them again, but I doubt I shall hardly accomplish it. If our commission for the treaty of commerce were arrived, and we were at liberty to treat in England, I might then come over to you, supposing the English ministry disposed to enter into such a treaty.

I have as you observe some enemies in England, but they are my enemies as an *American;* I have also two or three in America, who are my enemies as a *minis-*

ter; but I thank God there are not in the whole world any who are my enemies as a *man;* for by his grace, through a long life I have been enabled so to conduct myself, that there does not exist a human being who can justly say, Ben Franklin has wronged me. This, my friend, is in old age a comfortable reflection. You too have, or may have, your enemies; but let not that render you unhappy. If you make a right use of them they will do you more good than harm. They point out to us our faults; they put us upon our guard, and help us to live more correctly.

My grandsons are sensible of the honour of your remembrance, and join their respectful compliments and best wishes with those of, dear sir, your affectionate humble servant, B. FRANKLIN.

To Mrs. Bache.[1]

My Dear Child, *Passy, January* 26, 1784.

Your care in sending me the news-papers is very agreeable to me. I received by Captain Barney those relating to the *Cincinnati.* My opinion of the institution cannot be of much importance: I only wonder that when the united wisdom of our nation had, in the articles of confederation, manifested their dislike of establishing ranks of nobility, by authority either of the congress or of any particular state, a number of private persons should think proper to distinguish themselves and their posterity, from their fellow citizens, and form an order of *hereditary knights,* in direct opposition to the solemnly declared sense of their country. I imagine it must be likewise contrary to the good sense of most of those drawn into it, by the persuasion of its projectors, who have been too much struck with the ribbands and crosses they have seen hanging to the button holes of foreign officers. And I suppose those who disapprove of it have not hitherto given it much opposition, from a principle somewhat like that of your good mother, relating to punctilious persons who are always exacting little observances of respect, that "*if people can be pleased with small matters, it is a pity but they should have them.*" In this view, perhaps, I should not myself, if my advice had been asked, have objected to their wearing their ribband and badge themselves according to their fancy, though I certainly should to the entailing it as an honour on their posterity. For, honour worthily obtained, (as that for example of our officers) is in its nature a *personal* thing, and incommunicable to any but those who had some share in obtain-

[1] Dr. Franklin's only daughter, married to a merchant in Philadelphia.

ing it. Thus among the Chinese, the most ancient, and from long experience the wisest of nations, honour does not *descend*, but *ascends*. If a man from his learning, his wisdom, or his valour, is promoted by the Emperor to the rank of Mandarin, his parents are immediately entitled to all the same ceremonies of respect from the people, that are established as due to the Mandarin himself; on the supposition that it must have been owing to the education, instruction and good example afforded him by his parents that he was rendered capable of serving the public. This *ascending* honour is therefore useful to the state, as it encourages parents to give their children a good and virtuous education. But the *descending honour*, to a posterity who could have no share in obtaining it, is not only groundless and absurd, but often hurtful to that posterity, since it is apt to make them proud, disdaining to be employed in useful arts, and thence falling into poverty, and all the meannesses, servility, and wretchedness attending it; which is the present case with much of what is called the *noblesse* in Europe. Or if, to keep up the dignity of the family, estates are entailed entire on the eldest male heir, another pest to industry and improvement of the country is introduced, which will be followed by all the odious mixture of pride, and beggary, and idleness that have half depopulated and decultivated Spain; occasioning continual extinction of families by the discouragements of marriage, and neglect in the improvement of estates. I wish therefore that the Cincinnati, if they must go on with their project, would direct the badges of their order to be worn by their fathers and mothers, instead of handing them down to their children. It would be a good precedent and might have good effects. It would also be a kind of obedience to the fourth commandment, in which God enjoins us to *honour* our father and mother, but has no where directed us to honour our children. And certainly no mode of honouring those immediate authors of our being can be more effectual, than that of doing praiseworthy actions which reflect honour on those who gave us our education; or more becoming than that of manifesting by some public expression or token, that it is to their instruction and example we ascribe the merit of those actions.

But the absurdity of *descending honours* is not a mere matter of philosophical opinion, it is capable of mathematical demonstration. A man's son, for instance, is but half of his family, the other half belonging to the family of his wife. His son too, marrying into another family, his share in the grandson is but a fourth; in the great grandson by the same process it is but an eighth. In the next generation a sixteenth; the next a thirty second; the next a sixty fourth; the next an hundred and twenty eighth; the next a two hundred and fifty sixth; and the next a five hundred and twelfth: thus in nine generations which will not require more than

300 years, (no very great antiquity for a family) our present Chevalier of the Order of Cincinnatus's share in the then existing knight, will be but a 512th part; which, allowing the present certain fidelity of American wives to be insured down through all those nine generations, is so small a consideration, that methinks no reasonable man would hazard for the sake of it, the disagreeable consequences of the jealousy, envy, and ill-will of his countrymen.

Let us go back with our calculation from this young noble, the 512th part of the present Knight, through his nine generations till we return to the year of the institution. He must have had a father and mother, they are two; each of them had a father and mother, they are four. Those of the next preceding generation will be eight, the next sixteen, the next thirty-two, the next sixty-four, the next one hundred and twenty-eight, the next two hundred and fifty-six, and the ninth in this retrocession five hundred and twelve, who must be now existing, and all contribute their proportion of this future *Chevalier de Cincinnatus.* These, with the rest, make together as follows:—

	2
	4
	8
	16
	32
	64
	128
	256
	512
Total,	1022

One thousand and twenty-two men and women, contributors to the formation of one knight. And if we are to have a thousand of these future knights, there must be now and hereafter existing one million and twenty-two thousand fathers and mothers, who are to contribute to their production, unless a part of the number are employed in making more knights than one. Let us strike off then the 22,000 on the supposition of this double employ, and then consider whether after a reasonable estimation of the number of rogues and fools, and scoundrels, and prostitutes, that are mixed with, and help to make up necessarily their million of predecessors, posterity will have much reason to boast of the noble blood of the then existing set of

Chevaliers of Cincinnatus. The future genealogists too of these Chevaliers, in proving the lineal descent of their honor through so many generations, (even supposing honor capable in its nature of descending) will only prove the small share of this honor which can be justly claimed by any one of them, since the above simple process in arithmetic makes it quite plain and clear, that in proportion as the antiquity of the family shall augment, the right to the honor of the ancestor will diminish; and a few generations more would reduce it to something so small as to be very near an absolute nullity. I hope therefore that the Order will drop this part of their project, and content themselves as the Knights of the Garter, Bath, Thistle, St. Louis, and other Orders of Europe do, with a life enjoyment of their little badge and ribband, and let the distinction die with those who have merited it. This I imagine will give no offence. For my own part, I shall think it a convenience when I go into a company where there may be faces unknown to me, if I discover, by this badge, the persons who merit some particular expression of my respect; and it will save modest virtue the trouble of calling for our regard, by awkward round-about intimations of having been heretofore employed as officers in the continental service.

The gentleman who made the voyage to France to provide the ribbands and medals, has executed his commission. To me they seem tolerably done; but all such things are criticised. Some find fault with the Latin, as wanting classical elegance and correctness; and since our nine universities were not able to furnish better Latin, it was pity, they say, that the mottos had not been in English. Others object to the title, as not properly assumable by any but General Washington, and a few others, who served without pay. Others object to the bold eagle, as looking too much like a *Dindon* or turkey. For my own part, I wish the bold eagle had not been chosen as the representative of our country; he is a bird of bad moral character: he does not get his living honestly: you may have seen him perched on some dead tree, where, too lazy to fish for himself, he watches the labour of the fishing hawk; and when that diligent bird has at length taken a fish, and is bearing it to his nest for the support of his mate and young ones, the bold eagle pursues him, and takes it from him. With all this injustice he is never in good case, but like those among men who live by sharping and robbing, he is generally poor, and often very lousy. Besides, he is a rank coward: the little *king bird*, not bigger than a sparrow, attacks him boldly and drives him out of the district. He is therefore by no means a proper emblem for the brave and honest Cincinnati of America, who have driven all the *king-birds* from our country; though exactly fit for that order of knights which the French call *Chevaliers d'Industrie.* I am on this account, not displeased

that the figure is not known as a bold eagle, but looks more like a turkey. For in truth, the turkey is in comparison a much more respectable bird, and withal a true original native of America. Eagles have been found in all countries, but the turkey was peculiar to ours; the first of the species seen in Europe, being brought to France by the Jesuits from Canada, and served up at the wedding table of Charles the Ninth. He is besides, (though a little vain and silly 'tis true, but not the worse emblem for that) a bird of courage, and would not hesitate to attack a grenadier of the British guards, who should presume to invade his farm yard with a red coat on.

I shall not enter into the criticisms made upon their Latin. The gallant officers of America may not have the merit of being great scholars, but they undoubtedly merit much as brave soldiers from their country, which should therefore not leave them merely to *fame* for their *virtutis premium*, which is one of their Latin mottos. Their *esto perpetua*, another, is an excellent wish, if they meant it for their country; bad, if intended for their order. The states should not only restore to them the *omnia* of their first motto,[1] which many of them have left and lost, but pay them justly, and reward them generously. They should not be suffered to remain with all their new created chivalry *entirely* in the situation of the gentleman in the story, which their *omnia reliquit* reminds me of. You know every thing makes me recollect some story. He had built a very fine house, and thereby much impaired his fortune. He had a pride however in showing it to his acquaintance. One of them, after viewing it all, remarked a motto over the door ŌIA VANITAS. What, says he, is the meaning of this ŌIA? 'tis a word I don't understand. I will tell you, said the gentleman: I had a mind to have the motto cut on a piece of smooth marble, but there was not room for it between the ornaments, to be put in characters large enough to be read. I therefore made use of a contraction antiently very common in Latin manuscripts, whereby the *m's* and *n's* in words are omitted, and the omission noted by a little dash above, which you may see there, so that the word is *omnia*, OMNIA VANITAS. O, said his friend, I now comprehend the meaning of your motto, it relates to your edifice; and signifies, that if you have abridged your *omnia*, you have nevertheless left your VANITAS legible at full length.

I am, as ever, your affectionate father, B. FRANKLIN.

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[1] *Omnia reliquit servare rempublicam.*

To His Excellency Henry Laurens, Esq.

Dear Sir, *Passy, Feb.* 12, 1784.

I received your favour of the 3d instant by your son, with the newspapers, for which I thank you. The disorders of that government whose constitution has been so much praised, are come to a height that threatens some violent convulsion, if not a dissolution; and its physicians do not even seem to guess at the cause of the disease, and therefore prescribe insufficient remedies, such as *place bills, more equal representation, more frequent elections*, &c. &c. In my humble opinion, the malady consists in the *enormous salaries, emoluments, and patronage* of great offices. *Ambition and avarice* are separately strong passions: When they are united in pursuit of the same object, they are too strong to be governed by common prudence, or influenced by public spirit and love of country; they drive men irresistibly into factions, cabals, dissentions, and violent divisions, always mischievous to public councils, destructive to the peace of society, and sometimes fatal to its existence. As long as the immense profits of these offices subsist, members of the shortest and most equally chosen parliaments will have them in view, and contend for them, and their contentions will have all the same ruinous consequences. To me then there seems to be but one effectual remedy, and that not likely to be adopted by so corrupt a nation; which is, to abolish these profits, and make every place of *honor*, a place of *burthen*. By that means the effect of one of the passions above-mentioned would be taken away, and something would be added to counteract the other. Thus the number of competitors for great offices would be diminished, and the efforts of those who still would obtain them moderated.

Thank God we have now less connection with the affairs of these people, and are more at liberty to take care of our own, which I hope we shall manage better.

We have a terrible winter here, such another in this country is not remembered by any man living. The snow has been thick upon the ground ever since Christmas; and the frost constant.

My grandson joins in best compliments to yourself and Miss Laurens. With sincere esteem and affection I have the honour to be, dear Sir, &c. B. Franklin.

To W. Strahan, Esq. M.P. King's Printer, London.

Dear Sir, *Passy, Feb.* 16, 1784.

I received and read with pleasure your kind letter of the first instant, as it informed me of the welfare of you and yours. I am glad the accounts you have from your kinswoman at Philadelphia are agreeable, and I shall be happy

if any recommendations from me can be serviceable to Dr. Ross, or any others, friends of yours going to America.

Your arguments persuading me to come once more to England, are very powerful. To be sure I long to see again my friends there, whom I love abundantly: but there are difficulties and objections of several kinds, which at present I don't see how to get over.

I lament with you the political disorders England at present labours under. Your papers are full of strange accounts of anarchy and confusion in America, of which we know nothing, while your own affairs are really in a situation deplorable. In my humble opinion the root of the evil lies not so much in too long, or too unequally chosen parliaments, as in the enormous salaries, emoluments, and patronage of your great officers; and that you will never be at rest till they are all abolished, and every place of *honor* made at the same time, instead of a place of profit, a place of expence and burthen. Ambition and avarice are each of them strong passions, and when they are united in the same persons, and have the same objects in view for their gratification, they are too strong for public spirit and love of country, and are apt to produce the most violent factions and contentions. They should therefore be separated, and made to act one against the other. Those places, to speak in our old stile (brother type) may be good for the CHAPEL, but they are bad for the master, as they create constant quarrels that hinder the business. For example, here are two months that your government has been employed in *getting its form to press;* which is not yet fit to *work on*, every page of it being *squabbled,* and the whole ready to fall into *pye.* The founts too must be very scanty, or strangely *out of sorts,* since your *compositors* cannot find either *upper* or *lower-case letters* sufficient to set the word ADMINISTRATION, but are forced to be continually *turning for them.* However, to return to common (though perhaps too saucy) language, don't despair; you have still one resource left, and that not a bad one, since it may reunite the empire. We have some remains of affection for you, and shall always be ready to receive and take care of you in case of distress. So if you have not sense and virtue enough to govern yourselves, e'en dissolve your present old crazy constitution, and send members to congress.

You will say my *advice* smells of *Madeira.* You are right. This foolish letter is mere chit-chat *between ourselves,* over the *second bottle.* If, therefore, you shew it to any body (except our indulgent friends, Dagge and Lady Strachan) I will positively *solless* you. Yours ever most affectionately, B. FRANKLIN.

To Mr. Walter, Printer, London.

Sir, *Passy, April* 17, 1784.

I have received a book, for which, I understand I am obliged to you, the Introduction to Logography. I have read it with attention, and as far as I understand it, am much pleased with it. I do not perfectly comprehend the arrangement of his cases; but the reduction of the number of pieces by the roots of words, and their different terminations is extremely ingenious; and I like much the idea of cementing the letters, instead of casting words or syllables, which I formerly attempted and succeeded in, having invented a mould, and method by which I could in a few minutes form a matrice and adjust it, of any word in any fount at pleasure, and proceed to cast from it. I send inclosed a specimen of some of my terminations, and would willingly instruct Mr. Johnson in the method if he desired it, but he has a better. He mentions some improvements that have been proposed, but takes no notice of one published here at Paris, in 1776; so I suppose he has neither seen nor heard of it. It is in a quarto pamphlet, intitled, *Nouveau Systéme Typographique, ou Moyen de diminuer de moitié, dans toutes les Imprimeries de l'Europe, le travail et les frais de Composition, de Correction, et de Distribution, découvert en* 1774, *par Madame de* * * *. Frustra fit per plura quod potest fieri per pauciora. *A Paris de L'Imprimerie Royale,* MDCCLXXVI. It is dedicated to the King, who was at the expence of the experiments. Two commissaries were named to examine and render an account of them; they were M. Desmarets, of the Academy of Sciences, and M. Barbou, an eminent printer. Their report concludes thus; " Nous nous contenterons de dire ici que M. de St. Paul a rempli les engagemens qu'il avoit contractés avec le Gouvernement; que ses experiences projetées ont été conduites avec beaucoup de méthode et d'intelligence de sa part; et que par des calculs longs et pénibles, qui sont le fruit d'un grand nombre de combinaisons raisonnées, il en a deduit plusieurs résultats qui meritent d'être proposés aux artistes, et qui nous paroissent propres à éclairer la pratique de l'imprimerie actuelle, et à en abréger certainement les procédées. Son projet ne peut que gagner aux contradictions qu'il essuiera sans doute, de la part des gens de l'art. A Paris, le 8 Janvier, 1776." The pamphlet consists of sixty-six pages, containing a number of tables of words and parts of words, explanations of those tables, calculations, answers to objections, &c. I will endeavour to get one to send you if you desire it: mine is bound up with others in a volume. It was after seeing this piece that I cast the syllables I send you a sample of. I have not heard that any of the printers here make at present the least use of the invention of Madame de * * *. You will ob-

serve that it pretended only to lessen the work by one-half; Mr. Johnson's method lessens it three-fourths. I should be glad to know with what the letters are cemented. I think cementing better than casting them together, because if one letter happens to be battered, it may be taken away and another cemented in its place. I received no letter with the pamphlet. I am, Sir, &c. B. FRANKLIN.

To MR. BENJAMIN WEBB.

DEAR SIR, *Passy, April* 22, 1784.

I received your's of the 15th instant, and the memorial it inclosed. The account they give of your situation grieves me. I send you herewith a bill for ten Louis d'ors. I do not pretend to *give* such a sum; I only *lend* it to you. When you shall return to your country with a good character, you cannot fail of getting into some business that will in time enable you to pay all your debts: in that case, when you meet with another honest man in similar distress, you must pay me by lending this sum to him; enjoining him to discharge the debt by a like operation when he shall be able, and shall meet with such another opportunity. I hope it may thus go through many hands before it meets with a knave that will stop its progress. This is a trick of mine for doing a deal of good with a little money. I am not rich enough to afford *much* in good works, and so am obliged to be cunning and make the most of a *little*. With best wishes for the success of your memorial, and your future prosperity, I am, dear Sir, your most obedient servant, B. F.

To THE REV. DOCTOR MATHER, BOSTON.

REV. SIR, *Passy, May* 12, 1784.

I received your kind letter with your excellent advice to the people of the United States, which I read with great pleasure, and hope it will be duly regarded. Such writings, though they may be lightly passed over by many readers, yet if they make a deep impression on one active mind in an hundred, the effects may be considerable. Permit me to mention one little instance, which though it relates to myself, will not be quite uninteresting to you. When I was a boy, I met with a book entitled *Essays to do Good*, which I think was written by your father. It had been so little regarded by a former possessor, that several leaves of it were torn out: but the remainder gave me such a turn of thinking as to have an influence on my conduct through life; for I have always set a greater value on the character of a *doer of good*, than on any other kind of reputation; and if I have been,

as you seem to think, a useful citizen, the public owes the advantage of it to that book. You mention your being in your 78th year; I am in my 79th; we are grown old together. It is now more than sixty years since I left Boston, but I remember well both your father and grandfather, having heard them both in the pulpit, and seen them in their houses. The last time I saw your father was in the beginning of 1724, when I visited him after my first trip to Pennsylvania. He received me in his library, and on my taking leave shewed me a shorter way out of the house through a narrow passage, which was crossed by a beam over head. We were still talking as I withdrew, he accompanying me behind, and I turning partly towards him, when he said hastily, stoop, stoop! I did not understand him till I felt my head hit against the beam. He was a man that never missed any occasion of giving instruction, and upon this he said to me, *you are young, and have the world before you;* STOOP *as you go through it, and you will miss many hard thumps.* This advice thus beat into my head has frequently been of use to me, and I often think of it, when I see pride mortified, and misfortunes brought upon people by their carrying their heads too high.

I long much to see again my native place, and to lay my bones there. I left it in 1723; I visited it in 1733, 1743, 1753, and 1763. In 1773, I was in England; in 1775, I had a sight of it, but could not enter, it being in possession of the enemy. I did hope to have been there in 1783, but could not obtain my dismission from this employment here; and now I fear I shall never have that happiness. My best wishes however attend my dear country. *Esto perpetua.* It is now blest with an excellent constitution; may it last for ever!

This powerful monarchy continues its friendship for the United States. It is a friendship of the utmost importance to our security, and should be carefully cultivated. Britain has not yet well digested the loss of its dominion over us, and has still at times some flattering hopes of recovering it. Accidents may increase those hopes, and encourage dangerous attempts. A breach between us and France, would infallibly bring the English again upon our backs; and yet we have some wild heads among our countrymen, who are endeavouring to weaken that connection! Let us preserve our reputation by performing our engagements; our credit by fulfilling our contracts; and friends by gratitude and kindness; for we know not how soon we may again have occasion for all of them. With great and sincere esteem, I have the honour to be, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

To Dr. Percival.

Dear Sir, *Passy, July* 17, 1784.

I received yesterday by Mr. White, your kind letter of May 11th, with the most agreeable present of your new book.[1] I read it all before I slept, which is a proof of the good effects your happy manner has of drawing your reader on, by mixing little anecdotes and historical facts with your instructions. Be pleased to accept my grateful acknowledgments for the pleasure it has afforded me.

It is astonishing that the murderous practice of duelling, which you so justly condemn, should continue so long in vogue. Formerly when duels were used to determine law-suits, from an opinion that Providence would in every instance favour truth and right, with victory, they were excusable. At present, they decide nothing. A man says something, which another tells him is a lie. They fight; but whichever is killed, the point in dispute remains unsettled. To this purpose they have a pleasant little story here. A gentleman in a coffee-house desired another to sit further from him. Why so? Because, Sir, you stink. That is an affront, and you must fight me. I will fight you if you insist upon it; but I do not see how that will mend the matter. For if you kill me, I shall stink too; and if I kill you, you will stink, if possible, worse than you do at present. How can such miserable sinners as we are entertain so much pride, as to conceit that every offence against our imagined honor merits *death?* These petty princes in their own opinion would call that sovereign a tyrant, who should put one of them to death for a little uncivil language, though pointed at his sacred person: Yet every one of them makes himself judge in his own cause, condemns the offender without a jury, and undertakes himself to be the executioner. With sincere and great esteem, I have the honor to be, Sir, your most obedient, and most humble servant, B. Franklin.

P. S. Our friend, Mr. Vaughan, may perhaps communicate to you some conjectures of mine relating to the cold of last winter, which I sent him in return for the observations on cold of Professor Wilson. If he should, and you think them worthy so much notice, you may show them to your Philosophical Society,[2] to which I wish all imaginable success. Their rules appear to me excellent.

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[1] Moral and Literary Dissertations, 2d edition.

[2] The *Philosophical Society of Manchester* of which Dr. Percival was one of the principal founders and ornaments.

TO MESS. WEEMS AND GANT, CITIZENS OF THE UNITED STATES, LONDON.

GENTLEMEN, *Passy, near Paris, July* 18, 1784.

On receipt of your letter, acquainting me that the Archbishop of Canterbury[1] would not permit you to be ordained unless you took the oath of allegiance; I applied to a clergyman of my acquaintance for information on the subject of your obtaining ordination here. His opinion was, that it could not be done; and that if it were done, you would be required to vow obedience to the Archbishop of Paris. I next inquired of the Pope's Nuncio, whether you might not be ordained by their Bishop in America, powers being sent him for that purpose, if he has them not already. The answer was, the thing is impossible, unless the gentlemen become Catholics.

This is an affair of which I know very little, and therefore I may ask questions and propose means that are improper or impracticable. But what is the necessity of your being connected with the Church of England? Would it not be as well if you were of the Church of Ireland? The religion is the same, though there is a different set of bishops and archbishops. Perhaps if you were to apply to the Bishop of Derry,[2] who is a man of liberal sentiments, he might give you orders as of that Church. If both Britain and Ireland refuse you; and I am not sure that the Bishops of Denmark or Sweden would ordain you, unless you became Lutherans: what is to be done? Next to becoming Presbyterians, the Episcopalian Clergy of America, in my humble opinion, cannot do better than to follow the example of the first clergy of Scotland, soon after the conversion of that country to Christianity; who, when their King had built the Cathedral of St. Andrews, and requested the King of Northumberland to lend his bishops to ordain one for them, that their clergy might not as heretofore be obliged to go to Northumberland for orders, and their request was refused: they assembled in the Cathedral, and the mitre, crozier, and robes of a bishop being laid upon the altar, they, after earnest prayers for direction in their choice, elected one of their own number; when the King said to him, *Arise, go to the altar, and receive your office at the hand of God.* His brethren led him to the altar, robed him, put the crosier in his hand, and the mitre on his head, and he became the first Bishop of Scotland.

If the British islands were sunk in the sea (and the surface of this globe has suffered greater changes) you would probably take some such method as this: and if they persist in denying you ordination, it is the same thing. An hundred years hence, when people are more enlightened, it will be wondered at, that men in Ame-

[1] Dr. Moore. [2] Lord Bristol.

rica, qualified by their learning and piety to pray for and instruct their neighbours, should not be permitted to do it till they had made a voyage of 6,000 miles out and home, to ask leave of a cross old gentleman at Canterbury: who seems, by your account, to have as little regard for the souls of the people of Maryland, as King William's Attorney General, Seymour, had for those of Virginia. The Reverend Commissary Blair, who projected the College of that Province, and was in England to solicit benefactions and a charter; relates, that the Queen in the King's absence, having ordered Seymour to draw up the charter which was to be given, with £2000 in money, he opposed the grant; saying that the nation was engaged in an expensive war, that the money was wanted for better purposes, and he did not see the least occasion for a college in Virginia. Blair represented to him, that its intention was to educate and qualify young men to be ministers of the gospel, much wanted there; and begged Mr. Attorney would consider that the people of Virginia had souls to be saved as well as the people of England. *Souls!* (said he,) *damn your souls. Make tobacco!* I have the honor to be, gentlemen, &c. B. FRANKLIN.

To B. VAUGHAN, ESQ.

DEAR FRIEND, *Passy, July* 26, 1784.

I have received several letters from you lately, dated June 16, June 30, and July 13. I thank you for the information respecting the proceedings of your West India merchants, or rather planters. The restraints, whatever they may be upon our commerce with your islands, will prejudice their inhabitants, I apprehend, more than us. It is wonderful how preposterously the affairs of this world are managed. Naturally one would imagine that the interests of a few particulars, should give way to general interest. But particulars manage their affairs with so much more application, industry, and address than the public do theirs, that general interest most commonly gives way to particular. We assemble parliaments and councils to have the benefit of their collected wisdom, but we necessarily have at the same time the inconvenience of their collected passions, prejudices, and private interests. By the help of these, artful men overpower the wisdom, and dupe its possessors; and if we may judge by the acts, decrees, and edicts all the world over for regulating commerce, an assembly of wise men is the greatest fool upon earth.

I have received Cook's voyages, which you put Mr. Oswald in the way of sending to me. By some mistake the first volume was omitted, and instead of it a duplicate sent of the third. If there is a good print of Cook, I should be glad to have it,

being personally acquainted with him. I thank you for the pamphlets by Mr. Estlin. Every thing you send me gives me pleasure; to receive your account would give me more than all.

I am told that the little pamphlet of *advice to such as would remove to America*,[1] is reprinted in London, with my name to it, which I would rather had been omitted; but wish to see a copy when you have an opportunity of sending it.

Mr. Hartley has long continued here in expectation of instructions for making a treaty of commerce, but they do not come, and I begin to suspect none are intended; though perhaps the delay is only occasioned by the over great burthen of business at present on the shoulders of your ministers. We do not press the matter, but are content to wait till they can see their interest respecting America more clearly, being certain that we can shift as well as you without a treaty.

The conjectures I sent you concerning the cold of last winter still appear to me probable: the moderate season in Russia and Canada, do not weaken them. I think our frost here began about the 24th of December, in America, the 12th of January. I thank you for recommending to me Mr. Arbuthnot; I have had pleasure in his conversation. I wish much to see the new pieces you had in hand. I congratulate you on the return of your wedding-day, and wish for your sake and Mrs. Vaughan's, that you may see a great many of them, all as happy as the first.

I like the young stranger very much: he seems sensible, ingenious, and modest, has a good deal of instruction, and makes judicious remarks. He will probably distinguish himself advantageously.

I have not yet heard from Mr. Nairne.

Dr. Price's pamphlet of advice to America, is a good one, and will do good. You ask "what remedy I have for the growing luxury of my country, which gives so much *offence* to all *English travellers* without exception." I answer, that I think it exaggerated, and that travellers are no good judges, whether our luxury is growing or diminishing. Our people are hospitable, and have indeed too much pride in displaying upon their tables before strangers the plenty and variety that our country affords. They have the vanity too of sometimes borrowing one another's plate to entertain more splendidly. Strangers being invited from house to house, and meeting every day with a feast, imagine what they see is the ordinary way of living of all the families where they dine; when perhaps each family lives a week after upon the remains of the dinner given. It is, I own, a folly in our people to give *such offence* to *English travellers*. The first part of the proverb is thereby verified, that *fools*

[1] See *Papers on Miscellaneous Subjects*.

make feasts. I wish in this case the other were as true, *and wise men eat them.* These travellers might, one would think, find some fault they could more decently reproach us with, than that of our excessive civility to them as strangers.

I have not indeed yet thought of a remedy for luxury; I am not sure that in a great state it is capable of a remedy: nor that the evil is in itself always so great as it is represented. Suppose we include in the definition of luxury all unnecessary expence, and then let us consider whether laws to prevent such expence are possible to be executed in a great country; and whether, if they could be executed, our people generally would be happier, or even richer. Is not the hope of one day being able to purchase and enjoy luxuries a great spur to labour and industry? May not luxury therefore produce more than it consumes, if without such a spur people would be, as they are naturally enough inclined to be, lazy and indolent? To this purpose I remember a circumstance. The skipper of a shallop employed between Cape May and Philadelphia, had done us some small service, for which he refused pay. My wife understanding that he had a daughter, sent her as a present a new fashioned cap. Three years after, this skipper being at my house with an old farmer of Cape May, his passenger, he mentioned the cap, and how much his daughter had been pleased with it; but, said he, it proved a dear cap to our congregation. How so? When my daughter appeared in it at meeting, it was so much admired, that all the girls resolved to get such caps from Philadelphia; and my wife and I computed that the whole could not have cost less than a hundred pounds. True, said the farmer, but you do not tell all the story; I think the cap was nevertheless an advantage to us; for it was the first thing that set our girls upon knitting worsted mittens for sale at Philadelphia, that they might have wherewithal to buy caps and ribbands there; and you know that that industry has continued, and is likely to continue and increase to a much greater value, and answer better purposes. Upon the whole, I was more reconciled to this little piece of luxury; since not only the girls were made happier by having fine caps, but the Philadelphians, by the supply of warm mittens.

In our commercial towns upon the sea-coast, fortunes will occasionally be made. Some of those who grow rich, will be prudent, live within bounds, and preserve what they have gained for their posterity. Others fond of showing their wealth will be extravagant and ruin themselves. Laws cannot prevent this, and perhaps it is not always an evil to the public. A shilling spent idly by a fool, may be picked up by a wiser person, who knows better what to do with it: it is therefore not lost. A vain, silly fellow builds a fine house, furnishes it richly, lives in it expensively, and in a

few years ruins himself; but the masons, carpenters, smiths, and other honest tradesmen, have been by his employ assisted in maintaining and raising their families; the farmer has been paid for his labour and encouraged, and the estate is now in better hands. In some cases indeed, certain modes of luxury may be a public evil, in the same manner as it is a private one. If there be a nation, for instance, that exports its beef and linen to pay for its importations of claret and porter, while a great part of its people live upon potatoes, and wear no shirts, wherein does it differ from the sot who lets his family starve, and sells his clothes to buy drink? Our American commerce is, I confess, a little in this way. We sell our victuals to your islands for rum and sugar; the substantial necessaries of life for its superfluities. But we have plenty and live well nevertheless; though by being soberer we might be richer. By-the-by, here is just issued an *arrêt* of council taking off all the duties upon the exportation of brandies, which, it is said, will render them cheaper in America than your rum; in which case there is no doubt but they will be preferred, and we shall be better able to bear your restrictions on our commerce. There are views here by augmenting their settlements, of being able to supply the growing people of America with the sugar that may be wanted there. On the whole, I believe England will get as little by the commercial war she has begun with us, as she did by the military. But to return to luxury.

The vast quantity of forest lands we have yet to clear and put in order for cultivation, will for a long time keep the body of our nation laborious and frugal. Forming an opinion of our people and their manners, by what is seen among the inhabitants of the sea-ports, is judging from an improper sample. The people of the trading towns may be rich and luxurious, while the country possesses all the virtues that tend to private happiness and public prosperity. Those towns are not much regarded by the country; they are hardly considered as an essential part of the States. And the experience of the last war has shewn, that their being in possession of the enemy did not necessarily draw on the subjection of the country, which bravely continued to maintain its freedom and independence notwithstanding.

It has been computed by some political arithmetician, that if every man and woman would work four hours each day in something useful, that labour would produce sufficient to procure all the necessaries and comforts of life; want and misery would be banished out of the world, and the rest of the twenty-four hours might be leisure and pleasure.

What then occasions so much want and misery? It is the employment of men and women in works that produce neither the necessaries nor conveniencies of life; who

with those who do nothing, consume the necessaries raised by the laborious. To explain this,

The first elements of wealth are obtained by labour from the earth and waters. I have land, and raise corn; with this I feed a family that does nothing, my corn will be consumed, and at the end of the year I shall be no richer than I was at the beginning. But if, while I feed them, I employ them, some in spinning, others in hewing timber and sawing boards, others in making bricks, &c. for building; the value of my corn will be arrested, and remain with me, and at the end of the year we may all be better clothed and better lodged. And if instead of employing a man I feed, in making bricks, I employ him in fiddling for me, the corn he eats is gone, and no part of his manufacture remains to augment the wealth and the conveniences of the family; I shall therefore be the poorer for this fiddling man, unless the rest of my family work more or eat less to make up the deficiency he occasions.

Look round the world and see the millions employed in doing nothing, or in something that amounts to nothing, when the necessaries and conveniences of life are in question. What is the bulk of commerce for which we fight and destroy each other, but the toil of millions for superfluities, to the great hazard and loss of many lives by the constant dangers of the sea? How much labour spent in building and fitting great ships to go to China and Arabia for tea and for coffee; to the West Indies for sugar, to America for tobacco! These things cannot be called the necessaries of life, for our ancestors lived very comfortably without them.

A question may be asked, could all these people now employed in raising, making, or carrying superfluities, be subsisted by raising necessaries? I think they might. The world is large, and a great part of it still uncultivated. Many hundred millions of acres in Asia, Africa, and America, are still forest, and a great deal even in Europe. On 100 acres of this forest, a man might become a substantial farmer, and 100,000 men employed in clearing each his 100 acres, (instead of being, as they are, French hair-dressers) would hardly brighten a spot big enough to be visible from the moon, (unless with Herschell's telescope,) so vast are the regions still in the world unimproved.

'Tis however some comfort to reflect that upon the whole the quantity of industry and prudence among mankind, exceeds the quantity of idleness and folly. Hence the increase of good buildings, farms cultivated, and populous cities filled with wealth all over Europe, which a few ages since were only to be found on the coasts of the Mediterranean. And this, notwithstanding the mad wars continually raging, by which are often destroyed in one year the works of many years' peace. So that

we may hope the luxury of a few merchants on the sea coast will not be the ruin of America.

One reflection more and I will end this long rambling letter. Almost all the parts of our bodies require some expense. The feet demand shoes, the legs stockings, the rest of the body clothing, and the belly a good deal of victuals. *Our* eyes though exceedingly useful, ask when reasonable only the cheap assistance of *spectacles*, which could not much impair our finances. But THE EYES OF OTHER PEOPLE are the eyes that ruin us. If all but myself were blind, I should want neither fine clothes, fine houses, nor fine furniture. Adieu, my dear friend. I am Yours ever, B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. This will be delivered to you by my grandson. I am persuaded you will afford him your civilities and counsels. Please to accept a little present of books, I send by him, curious for the beauty of the impression.

To the Right Honourable Lord Viscount Howe.

My Lord, *Passy, August* 18, 1784.

I received lately the very valuable voyage of the late Captain Cook, kindly sent to me by your Lordship, in consideration of my good-will in issuing orders towards the protection of that illustrious discoverer from any interruption in his return home by American cruisers. The reward vastly exceeds the small merit of the action, which was no more than a duty to mankind. I am very sensible of his Majesty's goodness in permitting this favor to me, and I desire that my thankful acknowledgments may be accepted. With great respect, I am, my Lord, your Lordship's most obedient and most humble servant, B. FRANKLIN.

To Dr. Price.

Dear Friend, *Passy, August* 16, 1784.

I some time since answered your kind letter of July 12, returning the proof of Mr. Turgot's letter, with the permission of his friends to print it. I hope it came safe to hand.

I had before received yours of April which gave me great pleasure, as it acquainted me with your welfare, and that of Dr. Priestley.

The commencement here of the art of flying will, as you observe, be a new epoch. The construction and manner of filling the balloons improves daily. Some of the artists have lately gone to England. It will be well for your philosophers to obtain

from them what they know, or you will be behind hand; which in mechanic operations is unusual for Englishmen.

I hope the disagreements in our Royal Society are composed: quarrels often disgrace both sides; and disputes even on small matters often produce quarrels for want of knowing how to differ decently; an art which 'tis said scarce any body possesses but yourself and Dr. Priestley.

I had indeed thoughts of visiting England once more, and of enjoying the great pleasure of seeing again my friends there; but my malady otherwise tolerable, is I find irritated by the motion in a carriage, and I fear the consequence of such a journey; yet I am not quite resolved against it. I often think of the agreeable evenings I used to pass with that excellent collection of good men, the club at the London, and wish to be again among them. Perhaps I may pop in some Thursday evening when they least expect me. You may well believe it very pleasing to me to have Dr. Priestley associated with me among the foreign members of the Academy of Sciences. I had mentioned him upon every vacancy that has happened since my residence here, and the place has never been bestowed more worthily.

When you wrote the letter I am now answering, your nation was involved in the confusion of your new election. When I think of your present crazy constitution and its diseases, I imagine the enormous emoluments of place to be among the greatest, and while they exist I doubt whether ever the reform of your representation will cure the evils constantly arising from your perpetual factions. As it seems to be a settled point at present that the minister must govern the parliament, who are to do every thing he would have done; and he is to bribe them to do this, and the people are to furnish the money to pay these bribes. The parliament appears to me a very expensive machine for government, and I apprehend the people will find out in time that they may as well be governed, and that it will be much cheaper to be governed by the minister alone; no parliament being preferable to the present.

Your newspapers are full of fictitious accounts of distractions in America. We know nothing of them. Mr. Jefferson, just arrived here, after a journey through all the States from Virginia to Boston, assures me that all is quiet, a general tranquillity reigns, and the people well satisfied with their present forms of government, a few insignificant persons only excepted. These accounts are I suppose intended as consolatory, and to discourage emigrations. I think with you, that our revolution is an important event for the advantage of mankind in general. It is to be hoped that the lights we enjoy, which the ancient governments in their first establishment

could not have, may preserve us from their errors. In this the advice of wise friends may do much good, and I am sure that which you have been so kind as to offer us will be of great service.

Mr. Jay is gone to America; but Mr. Adams is just arrived here, and I shall acquaint him with your remembrance of him.

Many thanks for your kind wishes respecting my health and happiness, which I return fourfold, being ever with the sincerest esteem, my dear friend, your most affectionate B. FRANKLIN.

TO WILLIAM STRAHAN, ESQ. KING'S PRINTER, LONDON.

DEAR FRIEND, *Passy, Aug.* 19, 1784.

I received your kind letter of April 17. You will have the goodness to place my delay in answering, to the account of indisposition and business, and excuse it. I have now that letter before me; and my grandson, whom you may formerly remember a little scholar at Mr. Elphinston's, purposing to set out in a day or two on a visit to his father in London, I set down to scribble a little to you, first recommending him as a worthy young man to your civilities and counsels.

You press me much to come to England. I am not without strong inducements to do so; the fund of knowledge you promise to communicate to me is an addition to them, and no small one. At present it is impracticable. But when my grandson returns, come with him. We will talk the matter over, and perhaps you may take me back with you. I have a bed at your service, and will try to make your residence, while you can stay with us, as agreeable to you, if possible, as I am sure it will be to me.

You do not "approve the annihilation of profitable places; for you do not see why a statesman who does his business well, should not be paid for his labour as well as any other workman." Agreed. But why more than any other workman? The less the salary the greater the honour. In so great a nation there are many rich enough to afford giving their time to the public; and there are I make no doubt many wise and able men who would take as much pleasure in governing for nothing, as they do in playing chess for nothing. It would be one of the noblest amusements. That this opinion is not chimerical, the country I now live in affords a proof; its whole civil and criminal law administration being done for nothing, or in some sense for less than nothing, since the members of its judiciary parliaments buy their places, and do not make more than three per cent, for their money, by their fees and emoluments, while the legal interest is five; so that in fact they give

two per cent to be allowed to govern, and all their time and trouble into the bargain. Thus *profit*, one motive for desiring place, being abolished, there remains only *ambition;* and that being in some degree balanced by *loss*, you may easily conceive that there will not be very violent factions and contentions for such places; nor much of the mischief to the country that attends your factions, which have often occasioned wars, and overloaded you with debts impayable.

I allow you all the force of your joke upon the vagrancy of our congress. They have a right to sit *where* they please, of which perhaps they have made too much use by shifting too often.—But they have two other rights; those of sitting *when* they please, and as *long* as they please, in which methinks they have the advantage of your parliament; for they cannot be dissolved by the breath of a minister, or sent packing as you were the other day, when it was your earnest desire to have remained longer together.

You "fairly acknowledge that the late war terminated quite contrary to your expectation." Your expectation was ill founded; for you would not believe your old friend, who told you repeatedly that by those measures England would lose her colonies, as Epictetus warned in vain his master that he would break his leg. You believed rather the tales you heard of our poltroonery and impotence of body and mind. Do you not remember the story you told me of the Scotch serjeant who met with a party of forty American soldiers, and though alone, disarmed them all, and brought them in prisoners? a story almost as improbable as that of the Irishman, who pretended to have alone taken and brought in five of the enemy by *surrounding* them. And yet, my friend, sensible and judicious as you are, but partaking of the general infatuation, you seemed to believe it. The word *general* puts me in mind of a general, your General Clarke, who had the folly to say in my hearing at Sir John Pringle's that with a thousand British grenadiers he would undertake to go from one end of America to the other, and geld all the males, partly by force and partly by a little coaxing. It is plain he took us for a species of animals very little superior to brutes. The parliament too believed the stories of another foolish General, I forget his name, that the Yankies never *felt bold.* Yankey was understood to be a sort of Yahoo, and the parliament did not think the petitions of such creatures were fit to be received and read in so wise an assembly. What was the consequence of this monstrous pride and insolence? You first sent small armies to subdue us, believing them more than sufficient, but soon found yourselves obliged to send greater; these whenever they ventured to penetrate our country beyond the protection of their ships, were either repulsed and obliged

to scamper out, or were surrounded, beaten, and taken prisoners. An American planter who had never seen Europe, was chosen by us to command our troops, and continued during the whole war. This man sent home to you, one after another, five of your best generals baffled, their heads bare of laurels, disgraced even in the opinion of their employers. Your contempt of our understandings in comparison with your own appeared to be not much better founded than that of our courage, if we may judge by this circumstance, that in whatever court of Europe a Yankey negotiator appeared, the wise British minister was routed, put in a passion, picked a quarrel with your friends, and was sent home with a flea in his ear. But after all, my dear friend, do not imagine that I am vain enough to ascribe our success to any superiority in any of those points. I am too well acquainted with all the springs and levers of our machine, not to see, that our human means were unequal to our undertaking, and that if it had not been for the justice of our cause, and the consequent interposition of Providence, in which we had faith, we must have been ruined. If I had ever before been an Atheist, I should now have been convinced of the Being and government of a Deity! It is he who abases the proud and favours the humble. May we never forget his goodness to us, and may our future conduct manifest our gratitude.

But let us leave these serious reflections and converse with our usual pleasantry. I remember your observing once to me, as we sat together in the House of Commons, that no two journeymen printers within your knowledge, had met with such success in the world as ourselves. You were then at the head of your profession, and soon afterwards became a member of parliament. I was an agent for a few provinces and now act for them all. But we have risen by different modes. I as a republican printer, always liked a form well *plained down;* being averse to those *overbearing* letters that hold their heads so *high* as to hinder their neighbours from appearing. You as a monarchist chose to work upon *crown* paper, and found it profitable; while I worked upon *pro patria* (often indeed called *fools-cap*) with no less advantage. Both our *heaps hold out* very well, and we seem likely to make a pretty good day's work of it. With regard to public affairs, (to continue in the same stile) it seems to me that the compositors in your chapel do not *cast off their copy* well, nor perfectly understand *imposing:* their *forms* too are continually pestered by the *outs*, and *doubles*, that are not easy to be corrected. And I think they were wrong in laying aside some *faces*, and particularly certain *head-pieces*, that would have been both useful and ornamental. But, courage! The business may

still flourish with good management; and the master become as rich as any of the company.

By the way the rapid growth and extension of the English language in America, must become greatly advantageous to the booksellers, and holders of copy-rights in England. A vast audience is assembling there for English authors, ancient, present, and future, our people doubling every twenty years; and this will demand large and of course profitable impressions of your most valuable books. I would therefore, if I possessed such rights, entail them, if such a thing be practicable, upon my posterity; for their worth will be continually augmenting. This may look a little like advice and yet I have drank no *madeira* these six months. The subject however leads me to another thought which is, that you do wrong to discourage the emigration of Englishmen to America. In my piece on population, I have proved, I think, that emigration does not diminish but multiplies a nation. You will not have fewer at home for those that go abroad; and as every man who comes among us, and takes up a piece of land, becomes a citizen, and by our constitution has a voice in elections, and a share in the government of the country, why should you be against acquiring by this fair means a repossession of it, and leave it to be taken by foreigners of all nations and languages, who by their numbers may drown and stifle the English, which otherwise would probably become in the course of two centuries the most extensive language in the world, the Spanish only excepted? It is a fact, that the Irish emigrants and their children are now in possession of the government of Pennsylvania, by their majority in the assembly, as well as of a great part of the territory; and I remember well the first ship that brought any of them over. I am ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately, B. FRANKLIN.

TO GEORGE WHEATLEY, ESQ.

MY DEAR OLD FRIEND, *Passy, near Paris, Aug.* 21, 1784.

I received your kind letter of May 3—83. I am ashamed that it has been so long unanswered. The indolence of old age, frequent indisposition and too much business, are my only excuses. I had great pleasure in reading it, as it informed me of your welfare.

Your excellent little work, *the Principles of Trade*, is too little known. I wish you would send me a copy of it by the return of my grandson and secretary, whom I beg leave to recommend to your civilities. I would get it translated and printed here. And if your bookseller has any quantity of them left, I should be glad he

would send them to America. The ideas of our people there, though rather better than those that prevail in Europe, are not so good as they should be; and that piece might be of service among them.

Since and soon after the date of your letter, we lost unaccountably as well as unfortunately that worthy valuable young man you mention, your namesake, Maddison. He was infinitely regretted by all that knew him.

I am sorry your favourite charity[1] does not go on as you could wish it. It is shrunk indeed by your admitting only 60 children in a year. What you have told your brethren respecting America is true. If you find it difficult to dispose of your children in England, it looks as if you had too many people. And yet you are afraid of emigration. A subscription is lately set on foot here to encourage and assist mothers in nursing their infants themselves at home; the practice of sending them to the *Enfants trouvés* having risen here to a monstrous excess, as by the annual bill it appears they amount to near one third of the children born in Paris! The subscription is likely to succeed and may do a great deal of good, though it cannot answer all the purposes of a foundling Hospital.

Your eyes must continue very good since you can write so small a hand without spectacles. I cannot distinguish a letter even of large print; but am happy in the invention of double spectacles,[2] which serving for distant objects as well as near ones, make my eyes as useful to me as ever they were. If all the other defects and infirmities were as easily and cheaply remedied, it would be worth while for friends to live a good deal longer, but I look upon death to be as necessary to our constitution as sleep. We shall rise refreshed in the morning. Adieu, and believe me ever yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

To B. VAUGHAN, ESQ.

MY DEAR FRIEND, *Passy, Sept.* 7, 1784.

This will be delivered to you by Count Mirabeau; son of the Marquis of that name; author of *L'Ami des Hommes.* This gentleman is esteemed here, and I recommend him to your civilities and counsels, particularly with respect to the printing of a piece he has written on the subject of *hereditary nobility*, on occasion of the order of Cincinnati lately attempted to be established in America, which cannot be printed here. I find that some of the best judges think it extremely well written, with great clearness, force and elegance. If you can recommend him to an honest, reasonable bookseller, that will undertake it, you will do him service,

[1] The Foundling Hospital. [2] See letter to George Whately, Esq. dated Passy, May 23, 1785.

and perhaps some to mankind, who are too much bigotted in many countries to that kind of imposition.—I had formerly almost resolved to trouble you with no more letters of recommendation: but I think you will find this gentleman to possess talents, that may render his acquaintance agreeable. With sincere esteem, I am ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately, B. FRANKLIN.

To B. VAUGHAN, ESQ.

DEAR FRIEND, *Passy, April* 21, 1785.

I received your kind letter to the 23d past, by Mr. Perry, with the other bottle of Blackrie. I thank you much for your care in sending them. I should have been glad to be of any use to Mr. Perry; but he had placed his children before I saw him, and he staid with me only a few minutes.

We see much in parliamentary proceedings, and in papers and pamphlets, of the injury the concessions to Ireland, will do to the *manufacturers* of England, while the *people* of England seem to be forgotten, as if quite out of the question. If the Irish can manufacture cottons, and stuffs, and silks, and linens, and cutlery, and toys, and books, &c. &c. &c. so as to sell them cheaper in England than the *manufacturers* of England sell them, is not this good for the *people* of England, who are not manufacturers? And will not even the manufacturers themselves share the benefit? Since if cottons are cheaper, all the other manufacturers who wear cottons will save in that article; and so of the rest. If books can be had much cheaper from Ireland, (which I believe, for I bought Blackstone there for 24s. when it was sold in England at four guineas) is not this an advantage, not to English booksellers indeed, but to English readers, and to learning? And of all the complainants, perhaps these booksellers are least worthy of consideration. The catalogue you last sent me amazes me by the high prices (said to be the lowest) affixed to each article. And one can scarce see a new book, without observing the excessive artifices made use of to puff up a paper of verses into a pamphlet, a pamphlet into an octavo, and an octavo into a quarto, with scab-boardings, white-lines, sparse titles of chapters, and exorbitant margins, to such a degree, that the selling of paper seems now the object, and printing on it only the pretence. I inclose the copy of a page in a late comedy. Between every two lines there is a white space equal to another line. You have a law, I think, against butchers blowing of veal to make it look fatter; why not one against booksellers' blowing of books to make them look bigger. All this *to yourself;* you can easily guess the reason.

My grandson is a little indisposed, but sends you two pamphlets, *Figaro*, and *Le Roy Voyageur*. The first is a play of Beaumarchais, which has had a great run

here. The other a representation of all the supposed errors of government in this country, some of which are probably exaggerated. It is not publicly sold; we shall send some more shortly.

Please to remember me very respectfully and affectionately to good Dr. Price. I am glad that he has printed a translation of the Testament, it may do good. I am ever, my dear friend, yours most sincerely, B. FRANKLIN.

[*Inclosed in the foregoing Letter.*]

SCENE IV.

Sir JOHN and WILDMORE.

Sir JOHN.

Whither so fast?

WILDMORE.

To the Opera.

Sir JOHN.

It is not the————?

WILDMORE.

Yes it is.

SIR JOHN.

Never on a Sunday.

WILDMORE.

Is this Sunday?

Sir JOHN.

Yes sure.

WILDMORE.

I remember nothing; I shall soon forget my Christian name.

If this page was printed running on like Erasmus's Colloquies, it would not have made more than five lines.

From Dr. Franklin, to an Engraver in Paris.

Passy.

En relisant, Monsieur, le prospectus de votre éstampe, je vois que vous m'attribuez toujours en entier le mérite d'avoir affranchi l'Amerique. J'ay cependant eu l'honneur de vous dire, dans notre premiere conversation, que je ne pouvois y consentir sans me rendre coupable d'injustice envers tant d'hommes sages et courageux qui n'ont pas craint de hazarder leur fortune et leur vie pour le succès de cette entreprise; je vous proposai donc, et je persiste dans la même pensée, de substituer à mon nom dans l'implication de l'estampe, ces mots: "*le congrès représenté par un senateur habillé à la romaine, &c.*"

Je ne puis non plus, Monsieur, en accepter la dédicace: je ne veux point que la France, et mon pays me croyent assez presomptueux pour convenir que je merite des louanges aussi excessives; et vous concevez qu'il me siéroit mal d'appuyer de ma recommendation le debit d'un ouvrage qui les contiendroit. D'après ces considérations je vous prie de vouloir bien changer votre éxplication dans un nouveau prospectus, et de dedier votre estampe au Congrès. J'ai l'honneur d'étre, &c. B. Franklin.

To Dr. Ingenhousz.

Passy, April 29, 1785.

I thank you much for the postscript respecting my disorder, the stone. I have taken heretofore, and am now again taking the remedy you mention, which is called *Blackrie's Solvent*. It is the soap lie, with lime water, and I believe it may have some effect in diminishing the symptoms, and preventing the growth of the stone, which is all I expect from it. It does not hurt my appetite, I sleep well, and enjoy my friends in cheerful conversation as usual. But as I cannot use much exercise, I eat more sparingly than formerly, and I drink no wine.

I admire that you should be so timid in asking leave of your good imperial master, to make a journey for visiting a friend. I am persuaded you would succeed, and I hope the proposition I have repeated to you in this letter will assist your courage, and enable you to ask and obtain. If you come hither soon, you may when present, get your book finished, and be ready to proceed with me to America. While writing this, I have received from Congress my leave to return; and I believe I shall be ready to embark by the middle of July at farthest. I shall now be free from politics for the rest of my life. Welcome again, my dear philosophical amusements!

I see by a full page of your letter, you have been possessed with strange ideas of America, that there is no justice to be obtained there, no recovery of debts, projects

of insurrection to overturn the present government, &c. &c. that a Virginia Colonel, nephew of the Governor, had cheated a stranger of 100,000 livres, and that somebody was imprisoned for only speaking of it; and the like very improbable stories; they are all fictions or misrepresentations. If they were truths, all strangers would avoid such a country, and foreign merchants would as soon carry their goods to sell in Newgate as America. Think a little on the sums England has spent to preserve a monopoly of the trade of that people, with whom they had long been acquainted; and of the desire all Europe is now manifesting to obtain a share of that trade. Our ports are full of their ships, their merchants buying and selling in our streets continually, and returning with our products. Would this happen? Could such commerce be continued with us, if we were such a collection of scoundrels and villains as we have been represented to you? And insurrections against our rulers are not only unlikely, as the rulers are the choice of the people, but unnecessary; as if not liked they may be changed annually by the new elections. I own you have cause, great cause to complain of * * *, but you are wrong to condemn a whole country by a single sample. I have seen many countries, and I do not know a country in the world in which justice is so well administered, where protection and favour have so little power to impede its operations, and where debts are recovered with so much facility. If I thought it such a country as it has been painted to you, I should certainly never return to it. The truth, I believe, is, that more goods have been carried thither from all parts of Europe, than the consumption of the country requires, and it is natural that some of the adventurers are willing to discourage others from following them, lest the prices should still be kept down by the arrival of fresh cargoes; and it is not unlikely that some negligent or unfaithful factors sent thither, may have given such accounts to excuse their not making remittances. And the English magnify all this, and spread it abroad in their papers, to dissuade foreigners from attempting to interfere with them in their commerce with us.

Your account of the Emperor's condescending conversation with you concerning me, is pleasing. I respect very much the character of that monarch, and think that if I were one of his subjects, he would find me a good one. I am glad that his difference with your country is likely to be accommodated without bloodshed. The Courier de l'Europe, and some other papers, printed a letter on that difference, which they ascribed to me. Be assured, my friend, that I never wrote it, nor was ever presumptuous enough to meddle with an affair so much out of my way. Yours &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

To George Wheatley, Esq.

Dear old Friend, *Passy, May* 19, 1785.

I received the very good letter you sent me by my grandson, together with your resemblance, which is placed in my chamber, and gives me great pleasure. There is no trade, they say, without returns, and therefore I am punctual in making those you have ordered.

I intended this should have been a long epistle, but I am interrupted, and can only add, that I am ever yours most affectionately, B. Franklin.

To George Wheatley, Esq.

Dear old Friend, *Passy, May* 23, 1785.

I sent you a few lines the other day, with the medallion, when I should have written more, but was prevented by the coming in of a *bavard*, who worried me 'till evening. I bore with him, and now you are to bear with me: for I shall probably *bavarder* in answering your letter.

I am not acquainted with the saying of Alphonsus, which you allude to as a sanctification of your rigidity in refusing to allow me the plea of old age, as an excuse for my want of exactness in correspondence. What was that saying? You do not it seems feel any occasion for such an excuse, though you are, as you say, rising 75. But I am rising (perhaps more properly falling) 80, and I leave the excuse with you 'till you arrive at that age; perhaps you may then be more sensible of its validity, and see fit to use it for yourself.

I must agree with you that the gout is bad, and that the stone is worse. I am happy in not having them both together, and I join in your prayer, that you may live till you die without either. But I doubt the author of the epitaph you send me was a little mistaken, when he, speaking of the world, says that,

——————he ne'er cared a pin
What they said or may say of the mortal within.

It is so natural to wish to be well spoken of, whether alive or dead, that I imagine he could not be quite exempt from that desire; and that at least he wished to be thought a wit, or he would not have given himself the trouble of writing so good an epitaph to leave behind him. Was it not as worthy of his care that the world should say he was an honest and a good man? I like better the concluding sentiment in the old song, called the *Old Man's Wish*, wherein, after wishing for a warm house in a country town, an easy horse, some good authors, ingenious and cheerful companions,

a pudding on Sundays, with stout ale, and a bottle of Burgundy, &c. &c. in separate stanzas, each ending with this burthen,

May I govern my passions with absolute sway,
Grow wiser and better as my strength wears away,
Without gout or stone, by a gentle decay.

He adds,

With a courage undaunted may I face my last day;
And when I am gone, may the better sort say;
In the morning when sober, in the evening when mellow,
He's gone, and has not left behind him his fellow.
For he governed his passions, &c.

But what signifies our wishing? Things happen, after all, as they will happen. I have sung that *wishing song* a thousand times when I was young, and now find at fourscore that the three contraries have befallen me, being subject to the gout, and the stone, and not being yet master of all my passions. Like the proud girl in my country, who wished and resolved not to marry a parson, nor a Presbyterian, nor an Irishman, and at length found herself married to an Irish Presbyterian parson. You see I have some reason to wish that in a future state, I may not only be *as well as I was*, but a little better. And I hope it: for I too, with your poet, *trust in God.* And when I observe that there is great frugality as well as wisdom in his works, since he has been evidently sparing both of labour and materials; for by the various wonderful inventions of propagation, he has provided for the continual peopling his world with plants and animals, without being at the trouble of repeated new creations; and by the natural reduction of compound substances to their original elements, capable of being employed in new compositions, he has prevented the necessity of creating new matter; for that the earth, water, air, and perhaps fire, which being compounded form wood, do when the wood is dissolved return, and again become air, earth, fire, and water; I say, that when I see nothing annihilated, and not even a drop of water wasted, I cannot suspect the annihilation of souls, or believe that he will suffer the daily waste of millions of minds ready made that now exist, and put himself to the continual trouble of making new ones. Thus finding myself to exist in the world, I believe I shall in some shape or other always exist: and with all the inconveniences human life is liable to, I shall not object to a new edition of mine; hoping however that the *errata* of the last may be corrected.

I return your note of children received in the Foundling Hospital at Paris, from 1741 to 1755 inclusive; and I have added the years succeeding down to 1770. Those since that period, I have not been able to obtain. I have noted in the mar-

gin the gradual increase, viz. from every tenth child so thrown upon the public, 'till it comes to every third! Fifteen years have passed since the last account, and probably it may now amount to one half. Is it right to encourage this monstrous deficiency of natural affection? A surgeon I met with here excused the women of Paris, by saying seriously that they *could not* give suck, "*Car*, said he, *ils n'ont point de tetons.*" He assured me it was a fact, and bade me look at them, and observe how flat they were on the breast; they have nothing more there, said he, than I have upon the back of my hand. I have since thought that there might be some truth in his observation, and that possibly, nature, finding they made no use of bubbies, has left off giving them any. Yet, since Rousseau pleaded with admirable eloquence for the rights of children to their mother's milk, the mode has changed a little; and some ladies of quality now suckle their infants and find milk enough. May the mode descend to the lower ranks, till it becomes no longer the custom to pack their infants away as soon as born, to the *enfans trouvés*, with the careless observation, that the King is better able to maintain them. I am credibly informed that nine-tenths of them die there pretty soon, which is said to be a great relief to the institution, whose funds would not otherwise be sufficient to bring up the remainder. Except the few persons of quality above-mentioned, and the multitude who send to the hospital, the practice is to hire nurses in the country to carry out the children, and take care of them there. Here is an office for examining the health of nurses, and giving them licences. They come to town on certain days of the week in companies to receive the children, and we often meet trains of them on the road returning to the neighbouring villages, with each a child in arms. But those who are good enough to try this way of raising their children, are often not able to pay the expence, so that the prisons of Paris are crowded with wretched fathers and mothers confined *pour mois de nourrice*, though it is laudably a favourite charity to pay for them, and set such prisoners at liberty. I wish success to the new project of assisting the poor to keep their children at home, because I think there is no nurse like a mother, (or not many) and that if parents did not immediately send their infants out of their sight, they would in a few days begin to love them, and thence be spurred to greater industry for their maintenance. This is a subject you understand better than I, and therefore having perhaps said too much, I drop it. I only add to the notes a remark from the History of the Academy of Sciences, much in favour of the Foundling Institution.

The Philadelphia bank goes on, as I hear, very well. What you call the Cincinnati Institution, is no institution of our government, but a private convention

among the officers of our late army, and so universally disliked by the people, that it is supposed it will be dropped. It was considered as an attempt to establish something like an hereditary rank or nobility. I hold with you that it was wrong; may I add, that all descending honors are wrong and absurd; that the honors of virtuous actions appertain only to him that performs them, and is in its nature incommunicable. If it were communicable by descent, it must also be divisible among the descendants; and the more ancient the family, the less would be found existing in any one branch of it; to say nothing of the greater chance of unlucky interruptions.'

Our constitution seems not to be well understood with you. If the Congress were a permanent body, there would be more reason in being jealous of giving it powers. But its members are chosen annually, cannot be chosen more than three years successively, nor more than three years in seven; and any of them may be recalled at any time, whenever their constituents shall be dissatisfied with their conduct. They are of the people, and return again to mix with the people, having no more durable pre-eminence than the different grains of sand in an hourglass. Such an assembly cannot easily become dangerous to liberty. They are the servants of the people, sent together to do the people's business, and promote the public welfare; their powers must be sufficient, or their duties cannot be performed. They have no profitable appointments, but a mere payment of daily wages, such as are scarcely equivalent to their expences; so that having no chance for great places, and enormous salaries or pensions, as in some countries, there is no canvassing or bribing for elections. I wish Old England were as happy in its government, but I do not see it. Your people, however, think their constitution the best in the world, and affect to despise ours. It is comfortable to have a good opinion of oneself, and of every thing that belongs to us; to think one's own religion, king, and wife, the best of all possible wives, kings, or religions. I remember three Greenlanders, who had travelled two years in Europe, under the care of some Moravian missionaries, and had visited Germany, Denmark, Holland, and England; when I asked them at Philadelphia (where they were in their way home) whether now they had seen how much more commodiously the white people lived by the help of the arts, they would not choose to remain among us? their answer was, that they were pleased with having had an opportunity of seeing so many fine things, *but they chose to* LIVE *in their own country*. Which country, by the way, consisted of rock only, for the Moravians

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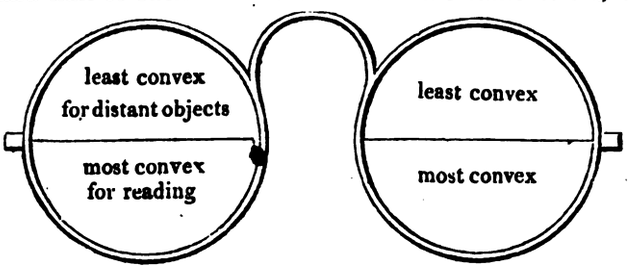
[1] See Letter to Mrs. Bache, Jan. 26, 1784. p. 46.

were obliged to carry earth in their ship from New York, for the purpose of making a cabbage garden.

By Mr. Dollond's saying that my double spectacles can only serve particular eyes, I doubt he has not been rightly informed of their construction. I imagine it will be found pretty generally true that the same convexity of glass through which a man sees clearest and best at the distance proper for reading, is not the best for greater distances. I therefore had formerly two pair of spectacles, which I shifted occasionally, as in travelling I sometimes read and often wanted to regard the prospects. Finding this change troublesome and not always sufficiently ready, I had the glasses cut, and half of each kind associated in the same circle, thus,



By this means, as I wear my spectacles constantly, I have only to move my eyes up or down as I want to see distinctly far or near, the proper glasses being always ready. This I find more particularly convenient since my being in France, the glasses that serve me best at table to see what I eat not being the best to see the faces of those on the other side of the table who speak to me; and when one's ears are not well accustomed to the sounds of a language, a sight of the movements in the features of him that speaks helps to explain; so that I understand French better by the help of my spectacles.

My intended translator of your piece, the only one I know who understands the *subject* as well as the two languages, (which a translator ought to do, or he cannot make so good a translation,) is at present occupied in an affair that prevents his undertaking it; but that will soon be over. I thank you for the notes. I should be glad to have another of the printed pamphlets.

We shall always be ready to take your children if you send them to us. I only wonder, that since London draws to itself and consumes such numbers of your country people, the country should not, to supply their places, want and willingly receive the children you have to dispose of. That circumstance, together with the multitude who voluntarily part with their freedom as men, to serve for a time as

lacqueys, or for life as soldiers, in consideration of small wages, seems to me proof that your island is over-peopled. And yet it is afraid of emigrations!

Adieu, my dear friend, and believe me ever, yours very affectionately, B. F.

To * * *

DEAR SIR, *Passy, August* 21, 1784.[1]

Understanding that my letter intended for you by General Melvill was lost at the Hotel D'Espagne, I take this opportunity by my grandson, to give you the purport of it, as well as I can recollect. I thanked you for the pleasure you had procured me of the General's conversation, whom I found a judicious, sensible and amiable man. I was glad to hear that you possessed a comfortable retirement, and more so that you had thoughts of removing to Philadelphia, for that it would make me very happy to have you there. Your *companions* would be very acceptable to the library, but I hoped you would long live to enjoy their company yourself. I agreed with you in sentiments concerning the old testament, and thought the clause in our constitutions which required the members of assembly to declare their belief, *that the whole of it was given by divine inspiration*, had better have been omitted. That I had opposed the clause; but being overpowered by numbers, and fearing more might in future times be grafted on it, I prevailed to have the additional clause, "that *no further or more extended profession of faith should ever be exacted.*" I observed to you too, that the evil of it was the less, as *no inhabitant*, nor any officer of government, except the members of assembly, was obliged to make that declaration. So much for that letter: to which I may now add, that there are several things in the old testament, impossible to be given by *divine* inspiration; such as the approbation ascribed to the angel of the lord, of that abominably wicked and detestable action of Jael, the wife of Heber, the Kenite. If the rest of the book were like that, I should rather suppose it given by inspiration from another quarter, and renounce the whole.

By the way, how goes on the Unitarian church in Essex street? and the honest minister of it,[2] is he comfortably supported? your old colleague Mr. Radcliff,[3] is he living? and what became of Mr. Denham?

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[1] This letter ought to have been placed in the order of its date, among those of 1784.

[2] Theophilus Lindsey M. A.

[3] A Dissenting Minister at Wapping, who afterwards turned to the profession of the Law. He published one or two sermons.

My grandson who will have the honor of delivering this to you, may bring me a line from you; and I hope will bring me an account of your continuing well and happy.

I jog on still, with as much health, and as few of the infirmities of old age as I have any reason to expect. But notwithstanding the decay of my constitution, my regard for my old friends remains firm and entire. You will always have a good share of it, for I am ever with great and sincere esteem, dear sir, &c. B. F.

To * * *.

DEAR SIR, *Passy, June* 20, 1785.

I have just received the only letter from you that has given me pain. It informs me of your intention to attempt passing to England in the car of a balloon. In the present imperfect state of that invention, I think it much too soon to hazard a voyage of that distance. It is said here by some of those who have had experience, that as yet they have not found means to keep up a balloon more than two hours; for that by now and then losing air to prevent rising too high and bursting; and now and then discharging ballast to avoid descending too low, these means of regulation are exhausted. Besides this all the circumstances of danger by disappointment, in the operation of *Soupape's* &c. &c. seem not to be yet well known, and therefore not easily provided against. For on Wednesday last M. Pilatre de Rosier, who had studied the subject as much as any man, lost his support in the air, by the bursting of his balloon, or by some other means we are yet unacquainted with, and fell with his companion from the height of one thousand toises, on the rocky coast, and was found dashed to pieces. You having lived a good life do not fear death. But pardon the anxious freedom of a friend, if he tells you that the continuance of your life being of importance to your family and your country, though you might laudably hazard it for their good, you have no right to risque it for a fancy. I pray God this may reach you in time and have some effect towards changing your design; being ever, my dear friend, Yours affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

To BARON MASERES.

SIR, *Passy, June* 26, 1785.

I have just received your friendly letter of the 20th instant. I agree with you perfectly in the opinion, that though the contest has been hurtful to both our countries, yet the event, a separation, is better even for yours than

success. The reducing and keeping us in subjection by an armed force would have cost you more than the dominion could be worth, and our slavery would have brought on yours. The ancient system of the British empire was a happy one, by which the colonies were allowed to govern and tax themselves. Had it been wisely continued, it is hard to imagine the degree of power and importance in the world that empire might have arrived at. All the means of growing greatness, extent of territory, agriculture, commerce, arts, population, were within its own limits, and therefore at its command. I used to consider that system as a large and beautiful porcelain vase, I lamented the measures that I saw likely to break it, and strove to prevent them; because once broken I saw no probability of its being ever repaired. My endeavours did not succeed: we are broken, and the parts must now do as well as they can for themselves. We may still do well though separated. I have great hopes of our side, and good wishes for yours. The anarchy and confusion you mention as supposed to prevail among us, exist only in your newspapers. I have authentic accounts which assure me that no people were ever better governed or more content with their respective constitutions and governments than the present thirteen states of America. A little reflection may convince any reasonable man, that a government wherein the administrators are chosen annually by the free voice of the governed, and may also be recalled at any time if their conduct displeases their constituents, cannot be a tyrannical one, as your loyalists represent it; who at the same time inconsistently desire to return and live under it. And among an intelligent enlightened people as ours is, there must always be too numerous and too strong a party for supporting good government and the laws, to suffer what is called anarchy. This better account of our situation must be pleasing to your humanity, and therefore I give it you.

But we differ a little in our sentiments respecting the loyalists (as they call themselves) and the conduct of America towards them, which you think "seems actuated by a spirit of revenge; and that it would have been more agreeable to policy as well as justice to have restored their estates upon their taking the oaths of allegiance to the new governments." That there should still be some resentment against them in the breasts of those who have had their houses, farms, and towns so lately destroyed, and relations scalped under the conduct of these royalists, is not wonderful; though I believe the opposition given by many to their re-establishment among us is owing to a firm persuasion, that there could be no reliance on their oaths; and that the effect of receiving those people again would be an introduction of that very anarchy and confusion they falsely reproach us with. Even the example you propose of the

English commonwealth's restoring the estates of the royalists after their being subdued, seems rather to countenance and encourage our acting differently, as probably if the power, which always accompanies property, had not been restored to the royalists; if their estates had remained confiscated and their persons had been banished, they could not have so much contributed to the restoration of kingly power, and the new government of the republic might have been more durable. The majority of examples in your history are on the other side of the question. All the estates in England and south of Scotland, and most of those possessed by the descendants of the English in Ireland, are held from ancient confiscations made of the estates of Caledonians, and Britons the original possessors in your island, or the native Irish, in the last century only. It is but a few months since that your parliament has in a few instances, given up confiscations incurred by a rebellion suppressed forty years ago. The war against us was begun by a general act of parliament declaring all our estates confiscated, and probably one great motive to the loyalty of the royalists was the hope of sharing in these confiscations. They have played a deep game staking their estates against ours; and they have been unsuccesful. But it is a surer game, since they had promises to rely on from your government of indemnification in case of loss; and I see your parliament is about to fulfil those promises. To this I have no objection, because though still our enemies, they are men; they are in necessity; and I think even an hired assassin has a right to his pay from his employer: it seems too more reasonable that the expence of paying these should fall upon the government who encouraged the mischief done, rather than upon us who suffered it; the confiscated estates making amends but for a very small part of that mischief: it is not therefore clear that our retaining them is chargeable with injustice. I have hinted above, that the name *loyalists*, was improperly assumed by these people. *Royalists* they may perhaps be called. But the true *loyalists*, were the people of America against whom they acted. No people were ever known more truly loyal, and universally so, to their sovereigns: the protestant succession in the House of Hanover was their idol. Not a jacobite was to be found from one end of the colonies to the other. They were affectionate to the people of England, zealous and forward to assist in her wars, by voluntary contributions of men and money, even beyond their proportion. The king and parliament had frequently acknowledged this by public messages, resolutions, and reimbursements. But they were equally fond of what they esteemed their rights, and if they resisted when those were attacked, it was a resistance in favour of a British constitution, which every Englishman might share in enjoying who should come to live among them:

it was resisting arbitrary impositions that were contrary to common right and to their fundamental constitutions, and to constant ancient usage. It was indeed a resistance in favour of the liberties of England, which might have been endangered by success in the attempt against ours; and therefore a great man in your parliament did not scruple to declare, he *rejoiced that America had resisted.* I for the same reason may add this very resistance to the other instances of their loyalty. I have already said that I think it just you should reward those Americans who joined your troops in the war against their own country: but if ever honesty could be inconsistent with policy, it is so in this instance. B. FRANKLIN.

To GRANVILLE SHARP, ESQ.

DEAR SIR, *Passy, July 5, 1785.*

I received the books you were so kind as to send me by Mr. Drown. Please to accept my hearty thanks. Your writings, which always have some public good for their object, I always read with pleasure. I am perfectly of your opinion with respect to the salutary law of gavel kind, and hope it may in time be established throughout America. In six of the states already the lands of intestates are divided equally among the children if all girls; but there is a double share given to the eldest son, for which I see no more reason than in giving such share to the eldest daughter; and think there should be no distinction. Since my being last in France, I have seen several of our eldest sons, spending idly their fortunes by residing in Europe, and neglecting their own country; these are from the southern states. The northern young men stay at home, and are industrious useful citizens; the more equal division of their fathers' fortunes not enabling them to ramble and spend their shares abroad, which is so much the better for their country.

I like your piece on the election of bishops. There is a fact in Hollingshead's Chronicle, the latter part relating to Scotland, which shews, if my memory does not deceive me, that the first bishop in that country was elected by the clergy: I mentioned it some time past in a letter to two young men,[1] who asked my advice about obtaining ordination, which had been denied them by the bishops in England, unless they would take the oath of allegiance to the king; and I said, I imagine that unless a bishop is soon sent over, with a power to consecrate others, so that we may have

[1] See Letter to Messrs. Weems and Gant, July 18, 1784, Page 57.

no future occasion of applying to England for ordination, we may think it right, after reading your piece, to elect also.

The liturgy you mention, was an abridgment of that made by a noble lord of my acquaintance, who requested me to assist him by taking the rest of the book, viz. the catechism and the reading and singing psalms. These I abridged by retaining of the catechism only the two questions, *What is your duty to God? What is your duty to your neighbour?* with answers. The psalms were much contracted by leaving out the repetitions (of which I found more than I could have imagined) and the imprecations, which appeared not to suit well the christian doctrine of forgiveness of injuries, and doing good to enemies. The book was printed for Wilkie in St. Paul's church yard, but never much noticed. Some were given away, very few sold, and I suppose the bulk became waste paper. In the prayers so much was retrenched, that approbation could hardly be expected; but I think with you a moderate abridgment might not only be useful, but generally acceptable.

I am now on the point of departing for America, where I shall be glad occasionally to hear from you, and of your welfare; being with sincere and great esteem, dear Sir, your most obedient and most humble servant, B. FRANKLIN.

To His Excellency General Washington.

DEAR SIR, *Philadelphia, Sept.* 20, 1785.

I am just arrived from a country where the reputation of General Washington runs very high, and where every body wishes to see him in person; but being told that it is not likely he ever will favor them with a visit, they hope at least for a sight of his perfect resemblance by means of their principal statuary, Mr. Houdon, whom Mr. Jefferson and myself agreed with to come over for the purpose of taking a bust, in order to make the intended statue for the state of Virginia. He is here, but the materials and instruments he sent down the Seine from Paris not being arrived at Havre when we sailed, he was obliged to leave them, and is now busied in supplying himself here. As soon as that is done, he proposes to wait on you in Virginia, as he understands there is no prospect of your coming hither, which would indeed make me very happy; as it would give me the opportunity of congratulating with you personally on the final success of your long and painful labours in the service of our country, which have laid us all under eternal obligations. With the greatest and most sincere esteem and respect, I am, dear Sir, your most obedient and most humble servant, B. FRANKLIN.

To the Honourable Dr. Franklin.
Answer to the Foregoing.

Dear Sir, *Mount Vernon, Sept. 26, 1785.*

I had just written, and was about to put into the hands of Mr. Taylor, (a gentleman in the department of the secretary for foreign affairs,) the inclosed letter, when I had the honor to receive your favor of the 20th instant.

I have a grateful sense of the partiality of the French nation towards me. And I feel very sensibly for the indulgent expression of your letter, which does me great honor.

When it suits Mr. Houdon to come hither, I will accommodate him in the best manner I am able, and shall endeavour to render his stay as agreeable as I can.

It would give me infinite pleasure to see you. At this place I dare not look for it, although to entertain you under my own roof would be doubly gratifying. When, or whether ever, I shall have the satisfaction of seeing you at Philadelphia, is uncertain, as retirement from the walks of public life has not been so productive of that leisure and ease, as might have been expected. With very great esteem and respect, I am, dear Sir, your most obedient humble servant, G. Washington.

To Mr. and Mrs. Jay.

Dear Friends, *Philadelphia, Sept. 21, 1785.*

I received your very kind letter of the 16th congratulating me on my safe arrival with my grandsons; an event that indeed makes me very happy, being what I have long ardently wished, and considering the growing infirmities of age, began almost to despair of. I am now in the bosom of my family, and find four new little prattlers, who cling about the knees of their grandpapa, and afford me great pleasure. The affectionate welcome I met with from my fellow-citizens, is far beyond my expectation; I bore my voyage very well, and find myself rather better for it, so that I have every possible reason to be satisfied with my having undertaken and performed it. When I was at Passy, I could not bear a wheel carriage; and being discouraged in my project of descending the Seine in a boat, by the difficulties and tediousness of its navigation in so dry a season, I accepted the offer of one of the king's litters, carried by large mules, which brought me well though in walking slowly to Havre. Thence I went over in a packet boat to Southampton, where I staid four days, till the ship came for me to Spithead. Several of my London friends came there to see me, particularly the good Bishop of St. Asaph and family, who staid with me to the last. In short I am now so well as to think it possible that I may once more have the pleasure of seeing you both

perhaps at New York, with my dear young friends (who I hope may not have quite forgotten me) for I imagine that on the sandy road between Burlington and Amboy, I could bear an easy coach, and the rest is water. I rejoice to hear that you continue well, being with true and great esteem and affection, your most obedient servant, B. FRANKLIN.

To M. MATHON DE LA COUR.

SIR, *Philadelphia, Nov.* 18, 1785.

I received duly the letter you did me the honour of writing to me the 25th of June past, together with the collection you have made *des comptes rendus de vos controleurs generaux;* and your *Discours sur les moyens d'encourager le patriotisme dans les monarchies.* The first is a valuable work, as containing a great deal of useful information; but the second I am particularly charmed with, the sentiments being delightfully just, and expressed with such force and clearness, that I am persuaded the pamphlet, though small, must have a great effect, on the minds of both princes and people, and thence be productive of much good to mankind. Be pleased to accept my hearty thanks for both.

It is right to be sowing good seed whenever we have an opportunity, since some of it may be productive. An instance of this you should be acquainted with, as it may afford you pleasure. The reading of Fortuné Ricard's Testament, has put it into the head and heart of a citizen to leave two thousand pounds sterling to two American cities, who are to lend it in small sums at five per cent. to young beginners in business; and the accumulation, after an hundred years, to be laid out in public works of benefit to those cities.[1] With great esteem, I have the honour to be, Sir, your most obedient and most humble servant, B. FRANKLIN.

To DR. BANCROFT, F. R. S. &c. LONDON.

DEAR SIR, *Philadelphia, Nov.* 26, 1786.

I received your kind letter of September 5, informing me of the intention Mr. Dilly has of printing a new edition of my writings, and of his desire that I would furnish him with such additions, as I may think proper. At present all my papers and manuscripts are so mixt with other things, by the confusions occasioned in sudden and various removals during the late troubles, that I can hardly find any thing. But having nearly finished an addition to my house, which will afford me room to put all in order, I hope soon to be able to comply

[1] See Dr. Franklin's Will.

with such a request; but I hope Mr. Dilly will have a good understanding in the affair, with Henry and Johnson, who having risqued the former impressions, may suppose they thereby acquired some right in the copy. As to the Life proposed to be written, if it be by the same hand who furnished a sketch to Dr. Lettsom, which he sent me, I am afraid it will be found too full of errors for either you or me to correct: and having been persuaded by my friends, Messrs. Vaughan and Monsieur Le Veillard, Mr. James of this place, and some others, that such a Life, written by myself, may be useful to the rising generation, I have made some progress in it, and hope to finish it this winter: so I cannot but wish that project of Mr. Dilly's biographer may be laid aside. I am nevertheless thankful to you for your friendly offer of correcting it.

As to public affairs, it is long since I gave over all expectations of a commercial treaty between us and Britain; and I think we can do as well, or better without one than she can. Our harvests are plenty, our produce fetches a high price in hard money, and there is in every part of our country, incontestable marks of public felicity. We discover, indeed, some errors in our general and particular constitutions; which it is no wonder they should have, the time in which they were formed being considered. But these we shall soon mend. The little disorders you have heard of in some of the States, raised by a few wrong heads, are subsiding, and will probably soon be extinguished. My best wishes, and those of my family attend you. We shall be happy to see you here, when it suits you to visit us: being with sincere and great esteem, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

To Dr. Shipley, Bishop of St. Asaph.

DEAR FRIEND, *Philadelphia, Feb.* 24, 1786.

I received lately your kind letter of November 27. My reception here, was, as you have heard, very honourable indeed; but I was betrayed by it and by some remains of ambition, from which I had imagined myself free, to accept of the Chair of Government for the State of Pennsylvania, when the proper thing for me was repose and a private life. I hope however to be able to bear the fatigue for one year, and then to retire.

I have much regretted our having so little opportunity for conversation when we last met.[1] You could have given me informations and counsels that I wanted, but we were scarce a minute together without being broken in upon. I am to thank

[1] At Southampton, previous to Dr. Franklin's embarking for the United States.

you however for the pleasure I had after our parting, in reading the new book[1] you gave me, which I think generally well written and likely to do good: though the reading time of most people is of late so taken up with newspapers, and little periodical pamphlets, that few now a days venture to attempt reading a quarto volume. I have admired to see that in the last century, a folio, *Burton on Melancholy*, went through six editions in about forty years. We have, I believe, more readers now, but not of such large books.

You seem desirous of knowing what progress we make here in improving our governments. We are I think in the right road of improvement, for we are making experiments. I do not oppose all that seem wrong, for the multitude are more effectually set right by experience, than kept from going wrong by reasoning with them. And I think we are daily more and more enlightened; so that I have no doubt of our obtaining in a few years as much public felicity as good government is capable of affording. Your newspapers are filled with fictitious accounts of anarchy, confusion, distresses and miseries we are supposed to be involved in, as consequences of the revolution; and the few remaining friends of the old government among us, take pains to magnify every little inconvenience a change in the course of commerce may have occasioned. To obviate the complaints they endeavour to excite, was written the inclosed little piece,[2] from which you may form a truer idea of our situation, than your own public prints would give you. And I can assure you that the great body of our nation find themselves happy in the change, and have not the smallest inclination to return to the domination of Britain. There could not be a stronger proof of the general approbation of the measures that promoted the change, and of the change itself, than has been given by the Assembly and Council of this State, in the nearly unanimous choice for their Governor, of one who had been so much concerned in those measures; the assembly being themselves the unbribed choice of the people, and therefore may be truly supposed of the same sentiments. I say nearly unanimous, because of between 70 and 80 votes, there were only my own, and one other in the negative.

As to my domestic circumstances, of which you kindly desire to hear something, they are at present as happy as I could wish them. I am surrounded by my offspring, a dutiful and affectionate daughter in my house, with six grand children, the eldest of which you have seen, who is now at College in the next street, finishing the learned part of his education; the others promising both for parts and

[1] Raley's Moral Philosophy. [2] Uncertain what piece is alluded to.

good dispositions. What their conduct may be when they grow up and enter the important scenes of life, I shall not live to *see*, and I cannot *foresee*. I therefore enjoy among them the present hour, and leave the future to Providence.

He that raises a large family, does indeed, while he lives to observe them, *stand*, as Watts says, *a broader mark for sorrow;* but then he stands a broader mark for pleasure too. When we launch our little fleet of barks into the ocean, bound to different ports, we hope for each a prosperous voyage; but contrary winds, hidden shoals, storms and enemies come in for a share in the disposition of events; and though these occasion a mixture of disappointment, yet considering the risk where we can make no insurance, we should think ourselves happy if some return with success. My son's son, (Temple Franklin) whom you have also seen, having had a fine farm of 600 acres conveyed to him by his father when we were at Southampton, has dropped for the present his views of acting in the political line, and applies himself ardently to the study and practice of agriculture. This is much more agreeable to me, who esteem it the most useful, the most independent, and therefore the noblest of employments. His lands are on navigable water, communicating with the Delaware, and but about 16 miles from this city. He has associated to himself a very skilful English farmer lately arrived here, who is to instruct him in the business, and partakes for a term of the profits; so that there is a great apparent probability of their success. You will kindly expect a word or two concerning myself. My health and spirits continue, thanks to God, as when you saw me. The only complaint I then had, does not grow worse and is tolerable. I still have enjoyment in the company of my friends; and being easy in my circumstances, have many reasons to like living. But the course of nature must soon put a period to my present mode of existence. This I shall submit to with less regret, as, having seen during a long life a good deal of this world, I feel a growing curiosity to be acquainted with some other; and can chearfully with filial confidence resign my spirit to the conduct of that great and good parent of mankind who created it, and who has so graciously protected and prospered me from my birth to the present hour. Wherever I am, I hope always to retain the pleasing remembrance of your friendship, being with sincere and great esteem, my dear friend, yours most affectionately, B. F.

We all join in respects to Mrs. Shipley, and best wishes for the whole amiable family.

To M. LE VEILLARD OF PASSY.

MY DEAR FRIEND, *Philadelphia, March* 6, 1786.

I received and read with great pleasure your kind letter of October 9. It informed me of your welfare, and that of the best of good women, and of her amiable daughter, who I think will tread in her steps. My effects came all in the same ship, in good order; and we are now drinking every day *les eaux épurées de Passy* with great satisfaction, as they kept well, and seem to be rendered more agreeable by the long voyage. I am here in the bosom of my family, and am not only happy myself, but have the felicity of seeing my country so. Be assured that all the stories spread in the English papers of our distresses, and confusions, and discontents with our new governments, are as chimerical as the history of my being in chains at Algiers. They exist only in the wishes of our enemies. America never was in higher prosperity, her produce abundant and bearing a good price, her working people all employed and well paid, and all property in lands and houses of more than treble the value it bore before the war; and our commerce being no longer the monopoly of British merchants, we are furnished with all the foreign commodities we need, at much more reasonable rates than heretofore. So that we have no doubt of being able to discharge more speedily the debt incurred by the war than at first was apprehended. Our modes of collecting taxes are indeed as yet imperfect, and we have need of more skill in financering; but we improve in that kind of knowledge daily by experience. That our people are contented with the revolution, with their new constitutions, and their foreign connections, nothing can afford a stronger proof than the universally cordial and joyous reception with which they welcomed the return of one that was supposed to have had a considerable share in promoting them. All this is in answer to that part of your letter in which you seem to have been too much impressed with some of the ideas which those lying English papers endeavour to inculcate concerning us.

I am astonished by what you write concerning the *Prince Evêque.*[1] If the charges against him are made good, it will be another instance of the truth of those proverbs which teach us, that *Prodigality begets necessity,* that *without Economy no revenue is sufficient,* and that *it is hard for an empty sack to stand upright.*

I am glad to hear of the marriage of Miss Brillon; for every thing that may contribute to the happiness of that beloved family, gives me pleasure. Be pleased to offer them my felicitations, and assure them of my best wishes.

[1] The Cardinal de Rohan.

Will you also be so good as to present my respectful compliments to Madame la Duchesse d'Enville, and to M. le Duc de la Rochefoucault? You may communicate the political part of this letter to that excellent man. His good heart will rejoice to hear of the welfare of America.

I made no progress when at sea in the history you mention:[1] but I was not idle there, having written three pieces, each of some length: one on Nautical matters; another on Chimnies; and the third a Description of my Vase for consuming Smoke, with directions for using it.[2] These are all now printing in the Transactions of our Philosophical Society, of which I hope soon to send you a copy.

My grandsons present their compliments. The eldest is very busy in preparing for a country life, being to enter upon his farm the 25th instant. It consists of about 600 acres, bounding on navigable water, 16 miles from Philadelphia. The youngest is at College, very diligent in his studies. You know my situation, involved in public cares, but they cannot make me forget that you and I love one another, and that I am ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately, B. F.

To Mrs. Hewson, London.

My Dear Friend, *Philadelphia, May* 6, 1786.

A long winter has passed and I have not had the pleasure of a line from you, acquainting me with your and your children's welfare, since I left England. I suppose you have been in Yorkshire out of the way and knowledge of opportunities; for I will not think you have forgotten me. To make me some amends, I received a few days past a large packet from Mr. Williams, dated September 1776, near ten years since, containing three letters from you, one of December 12, 1775. This packet had been received by Mr. Bache after my departure for France, lay dormant among his papers during all my absence, and has just now broke out upon me *like words, congealed in Northern air.* Therein I find all the pleasing little family history of your children; how William had begun to spell, overcoming by strength of memory all the difficulty occasioned by the common wretched alphabet; while you were convinced of the utility of our new one. How Tom, genius-like, struck out new paths, and relinquishing the old names of the letters, called U *Bell* and P *Bottle.* How Eliza began to grow jolly, that is fat and handsome, resembling Aunt Rooke whom I used to call *my lovely.* Together with all the *then* news of Lady Blunt's having produced at length a boy; of Dolly's being well, and of poor good Catherine's

[1] Dr. Franklin's "*Memoirs of his Life.*"

[2] Inserted in "*Letters and Papers on Philosophical Subjects.*"

decease. Of your affairs with Muir and Atkinson, and of their contract for feeding the fish in the Channel. Of the Vinys, and their jaunt to Cambridge in the long carriages. Of Dolly's journey to Wales with Mr. Scot. Of the Wilkes's, the Pearces, Elphinston, &c. &c. Concluding with a kind of promise, that as soon as the Ministry and Congress agreed to make peace, I should have you with me in America. That peace has been some time made, but alas! the promise is not yet fulfilled.—And why is it not fulfilled?

I have found my family here in health, good circumstances, and well respected by their fellow citizens. The companions of my youth are indeed almost all departed, but I find an agreeable society among their children and grand children. I have public business enough to preserve me from *ennui*, and private amusement besides, in conversation, books, my garden, *and cribbage*. Considering our well furnished plentiful market as the best of gardens, I am turning mine, in the midst of which my house stands, into grass plats, and gravel walks with trees and flowering shrubs. Cards we sometimes play here in long winter evenings, but it is as they play at chess, not for money but for honour, or the pleasure of beating one another. This will not be quite a novelty to you; as you may remember we played together in that manner during the winter you helped me to pass so agreeably at Passy. I have indeed now and then a little compunction in reflecting that I spend time so idly; but another reflection comes to relieve me, whispering, "You know the soul is immortal; why then should you be such a niggard of a little time, when you have a whole eternity before you?" So being easily convinced, and, like other reasonable creatures, satisfied with a small reason, when it is in favour of doing what I have a mind to do, I shuffle the cards again and begin another game.

As to public amusements, we have neither plays nor operas, but we had yesterday a kind of oratorio, as you will see by the inclosed paper; and we have assemblies, balls, and concerts, besides little parties at one another's houses, in which there is sometimes dancing, and frequently good music; so that we jog on in life as pleasantly as you do in England, any where but in London; for there you have plays performed by good actors. That however is, I think, the only advantage London has over Philadelphia.

Temple has turned his thoughts to agriculture, which he pursues ardently, being in possession of a fine farm that his father lately conveyed to him. Ben is finishing his studies at College, and continues to behave as well as when you knew him, so that I still think he will make you a good son. His younger brothers and sisters are also all promising, appearing to have good tempers and dispositions, as well as good constitutions. As to myself, I think my general health and spirits rather better than

when you saw me, and the particular malady I then complained of, continues tolerable. With sincere and very great esteem, I am ever, my dear dear friend, yours most affectionately, B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. My children and grand children join with me in best wishes for you and yours. My love to my godson, to Eliza, and to honest Tom. They will all find agreeable companions here. Love to Dolly,[1] and tell her she will do well to come with you.

To NOAH WEBSTER, ESQ.

SIR, *Philadelphia, June* 18, 1786.

I received the letter you did me the honour of writing to me the 24th past, with the scheme enclosed of your reformed Alphabet. I think the reformation not only necessary but practicable; but have so much to say to you on the subject, that I wish to see and confer with you upon it, as that would save much time and writing. Sounds, 'till such an alphabet is fixed, not being easily explained or discoursed of clearly upon paper. I have formerly considered this matter pretty fully, and contrived some of the means of carrying it into execution, so as gradually to render the reformation general. Our ideas are so nearly similar that I make no doubt of our easily agreeing on the plan, and you may depend on the best support I may be able to give it as a part of your institute, of which I wish you would bring with you a complete copy, having as yet seen only a part of it: I shall then be better able to recommend it as you desire. Hoping to have soon the pleasure of seeing you, I do not enlarge, but am with sincere esteem, Sir, your most obedient and most humble servant, B. FRANKLIN.

To WILLIAM COOKE, ESQ.

SIR, *Philadelphia, August* 12, 1786.

I received yesterday the letter you did me the honour of writing to me on the 15th of June past. I had never before been acquainted that the name of your intended New State, had any relation with my name, having understood that it was called *Frank Land.* It is a very great honour indeed that its inhabitants have done me, and I should be happy if it were in my power to show how sensible I am of it, by something more essential than my wishes for their prosperity.

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[1] Mrs. Dorothy Blunt.

Having resided some years past in Europe, and being but lately arrived thence, I have not had an opportunity of being well informed of the points in dispute between you and the State of North Carolina. I can therefore only say, that I think you are perfectly right in resolving to submit them to the discretion of Congress, and to abide by their determination. It is a wise and impartial tribunal, which can have no sinister views to warp its judgment. 'Tis happy for us all, that we have now in our own country such a council to apply to, for composing our differences, without being obliged, as formerly, to carry them across the ocean to be decided, at an immense expence, by a council which knew little of our affairs, would hardly take any pains to understand them, and which often treated our applications with contempt, and rejected them with injurious language. Let us therefore cherish and respect our own tribunal, for the more generally it is held in high regard, the more able it will be to answer effectually the ends of its institution, the quieting of our contentions, and thereby promoting our common peace and happiness.

I do not hear any talk of an adjournment of Congress concerning which you inquire; and I rather think it likely they may continue to sit out their year, as it is but lately they have been able to make a quorum for business, which must therefore probably be in arrear. If you proceed in your intended journey, I shall be glad to see you as you pass through Philadelphia. In the mean time, I have the honour to be, very respectfully, Sir, your most obedient servant, B. FRANKLIN.

To COLONEL HUNTER.

MY DEAR OLD FRIEND, *Philadelphia, Nov. 24, 1786.*

It rejoiced me much to learn by your kind letter of February last, which I received about ten days since, that you are still in the land of the living; and that you are snug at Bath, the very place that I think gives you the best chance of passing the evening of life agreeably. I too am got into my *niche*, after being kept out of it 24 years by foreign employments. 'Tis a very good house that I built so long ago to retire into, without being able till now to enjoy it. I am again surrounded by my friends, with a fine family of grand children about my knees, and an affectionate good daughter and son-in-law to take care of me. And after fifty years public service, I have the pleasure to find the esteem of my country with regard to me undiminished; the late re-election of me to the Presidentship, notwithstanding the different parties we are split into, being absolutely unanimous. This I tell to you, not merely to indulge my own vanity, but because I know you

love me, and will be pleased to hear of whatever happens that is agreeable to your friend.

I find Mr. Anstey, whom you recommend to me, a very agreeable sensible man, and shall render him any service that may lie in my power. I thank you for the New Bath Guide: I had read it formerly, but it has afforded me fresh pleasure.

Your newspapers, to please honest *John Bull*, paint our situation here in frightful colours, as if we were very miserable since we broke our connection with him. But I will give you some marks by which you may form your own judgment. Our husbandmen, who are the bulk of the nation, have had plentiful crops, their produce sells at high prices and for ready hard money: wheat for instance at 8s. a 8s. 6d. per bushel. Our working people are all employed and get high wages, are well fed and well clad. Our estates in houses are trebled in value by the rising of rents since the revolution. Buildings in Philadelphia increase amazingly, besides small towns arising in every quarter of the country. The laws govern, justice is well administered, and property as secure as in any country on the globe. Our wilderness lands are daily buying up by new settlers, and our settlements extend rapidly to the westward. European goods were never so cheaply afforded us, as since Britain has no longer the monopoly of supplying us. In short all among us may be happy—who have happy dispositions,—such being necessary to happiness even in paradise.

I speak these things of Pennsylvania, with which I am most acquainted: as to the other States, when I read in all the papers of the extravagant rejoicings every 4th of July, the day on which was signed the declaration of Independence, I am convinced that none of them are discontented with the revolution.

Adieu! my dear friend! and believe me ever with sincere esteem and affection, yours most truly, B. FRANKLIN.

TO MR. SMALL.

DEAR FRIEND, *Philadelphia, Feb.* 19, 1787.

I received your favour of June last, and thank you for the kind congratulations contained in it. What you have heard of my malady is true, "that it does not grow worse." Thanks be to God I still enjoy pleasure in the society of my friends and books, and much more in the prosperity of my country, concerning which your people are continually deceiving themselves.

I am glad the improvement of the Book of Common Prayer has met with your approbation and that of good Mrs. Baldwin. It is not yet that I know of, received

in public practice any where; but as it is said that good motions never die, perhaps in time it may be found useful.

I read with pleasure the account you give of the flourishing state of your commerce and manufactures, and of the plenty you have of resources to carry the nation through all its difficulties. You have one of the finest countries in the world, and if you can be cured of the folly of making war for trade, (in which wars more has been always expended than the profits of any trade can compensate) you may make it one of the happiest. Make the best of your own natural advantages instead of endeavouring to diminish those of other nations, and there is no doubt but you may yet prosper and flourish. Your beginning to consider France no longer as a natural enemy, is a mark of progress in the good sense of the nation, of which posterity will find the benefit; in the rarity of wars, the diminution of taxes, and increase of riches.

As to the refugees whom you think we were so impolitic in rejecting, I do not find that they are missed here, or that any body regrets their absence. And certainly they must be happier where they are, under the government they admire; and be better received among a people whose cause they espoused and fought for, than among those who cannot so soon have forgotten the destruction of their habitations and the spilt blood of their dearest friends and near relations.

I often think with great pleasure on the happy days I passed in England with my and your learned and ingenious friends, who have left us to join the majority in the world of spirits. Every one of them now knows more than all of us they have left behind. It is to me a comfortable reflection, that since we must live for ever in a future state, there is a sufficient stock of amusement in reserve for us, to be found in constantly learning something new to eternity, the present quantity of human ignorance infinitely exceeding that of human knowledge.

Adieu! my dear friend, and believe me in whatever world, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN,
in his 82d Year.

To M. LE VEILLARD.

Philadelphia, April 15, 1787.

I am quite of your opinion that our independence is not quite complete till we have discharged our public debt. This State is not behind hand in its proportion, and those who are in arrear, are actually employed in contriving means to discharge their respective balances, but they are not all equally diligent

in the business, nor equally successful, the whole will however be paid, I am persuaded, in a few years.

The English have not yet delivered up the posts on our frontier, agreeable to treaty; the pretence is, that our merchants here have not paid their debts. I was a little provoked when I first heard this, and I wrote some remarks upon it which I send you: they have been written near a year, but I have not yet published them, being unwilling to encourage any of our people who may be able to pay, in their neglect of that duty. The paper is therefore only for your amusement and that of our excellent friend the Duke de la Rochefoucauld.

As to my malady concerning which you so kindly enquire, I have never had the least doubt of its being the stone; and I am sensible that it has increased; but on the whole it does not give me more pain than when at Passy. People who live long, who will drink of the cup of life to the very bottom, must expect to meet with some of the usual dregs; and when I reflect on the number of terrible maladies human nature is subject to, I think myself favoured in having to my share only the stone and gout.

You were right in conjecturing that I wrote the remarks on the "*thoughts concerning executive justice.*" I have no copy of those remarks at hand, and forget how the saying was introduced that it is better a thousand guilty persons should escape, than one innocent suffer. Your criticisms thereon appear to be just, and I imagine you may have misapprehended my intention in mentioning it. I always thought with you, that the prejudice in Europe which supposes a family dishonoured by the punishment of one of its members, was very absurd, it being on the contrary my opinion, that a rogue hanged out of a family does it more honour than ten that live in it.

To the Duke de la Rochefoucauld. *Paris.*

Philadelphia, April 15, 1787.

I have been happy in receiving three very kind letters from my greatly respected and esteemed friend, since my being in America. They are dated November 30, 85, February 8, 86, and January 14, 87. In mine of this date to M. le Veillard, I have made the best apology I could for my being so bad a correspondent. I will not trouble you with a repetition of it, as I know you often see him. I will only confess my fault, and trust to your candour and goodness for my pardon.

Your friendly congratulations on my arrival and reception here were very obliging. The latter was, as you have heard, extremely flattering. The two parties in

the assembly and council, the constitutionists and anti-constitutionists joined in requesting my service as counsellor, and afterwards in electing me as president. Of seventy four members in council and assembly who voted by ballot, there was in my first election but one negative beside my own; and in the second, after a year's service, only my own. And I experience from all the principal people in the government, every attention and assistance that can be desired towards making the task as little burthensome to me as possible. So I am going on very comfortably hitherto with my second year, and I do not at present see any likelihood of a change: but future events are always uncertain, being governed by Providence or subject to chances; and popular favor is very precarious, being sometimes *lost* as well as *gained* by good actions, so I do not depend on a continuance of my present happiness, and therefore shall not be surprized if before my time of service expires, something should happen to diminish it.

These states in general enjoy peace and plenty. There have been some disorders in the Massachusetts and Rhode island governments; those in the former are quelled for the present: those of the latter, being contentions for and against paper money, will probably continue some time. Maryland too is divided on the same subject, the assembly being for it, and the senate against it. Each is now employed in endeavouring to gain the people to its party against the next elections, and 'tis probable the assembly may prevail. Paper money in moderate quantities has been found beneficial; when more than the occasions of commerce require, it depreciated and was mischievous; and the populace are apt to demand more than is necessary. In this state we have some, and it is useful, and I do not hear any clamour for more.

There seems to be but little thought at present in the particular states, of mending their particular constitutions; but the grand federal constitution is generally blamed as not having given sufficient powers to congress, the federal head. A convention is therefore appointed to revise that constitution, and propose a better. You will see by the inclosed paper that your friend is to be one in that business, though he doubts his malady may not permit his giving constant attendance. I am glad to see that you are named as one of a general assembly to be convened in France. I flatter myself that great good may accrue to that dear nation from the deliberations of such an assembly. I pray God to give it his blessing.

I sympathise with you and the family most sincerely, in the great loss sustained by the decease of that excellent woman.[1] It must be indeed a heavy one. My best

[1] The Duchess D'Anville, mother of the Duke de la Rochefoucauld.

wishes attend those that remain, and that the happiness of your sweet domestic society may long continue without such another interruption.

I send herewith a volume of the transactions of our Philosophical Society for you, another for M. de Condorcet, and a third for the academy. The war had interrupted our attempts to improve ourselves in scientific matters, but we now begin to resume them.

The bearer of this is Mr. Paine, the author of a famous piece entitled *Common Sense*, published here with great effect on the minds of the people at the beginning of the revolution. He is an ingenious, honest man, and as such I beg leave to recommend him to your civilities. He carries with him the model of a bridge of a new construction, his own invention, concerning which I intended to have recommended him to Mr. Peyronnet, but I hear he is no more. You can easily procure Mr. Paine a sight of the models and drawings of the collection appertaining to the *Ponts et Chaussées;* they must afford him useful lights on the subject. We want a bridge over our river Skuylkill, and have no artist here regularly bred to that kind of architecture.

My grandsons are very sensible of the honour of your remembrance, and desire me to present their respects.

With the most sincere and perfect esteem and attachment, I am ever, my dear friend, your most obedient and most humble servant, B. FRANKLIN.

TO THE MARQUIS DE CHASTELLEUX.[1]

DEAR SIR, *Philadelphia, April* 17, 1787.

Your most pleasing letter accompanied by the invaluable present of your journal, and translation of Colonel Humphreys's poem, came to hand but lately, though dated in June last. I believe they have been in the West Indies. They have given me a great deal of pleasure in the perusal, as every thing of yours always did. The portrait you have made of our country and people is what in painting is called *a handsome likeness*, for which we are much obliged to you. We shall be the better for it if we endeavour to merit what you kindly say in our favour, and to correct what you justly censure. I am told the journal is trans-

[1] FRANÇOIS JEAN MARQUIS DE CHASTELLEUX Camp Marshal in the French army, and a member of the Academy, died at Paris October 24, 1788. He was of an illustrious family to which he was an ornament by his military services and his literary works, of which the principal are, a Treatise on Public Happiness 8vo, and Travels in North America in 1780,—1782. 8vo.

lated into English, and printed in one of the states, I know not which, not having seen the translation.

The newspapers tell us, that you are about to have an assembly of Notables, to consult on improvements of your government. It is somewhat singular, that we should be engaged in the same project here at the same time; but so it is, and a convention for the purpose of revising and amending our federal constitution is to meet at this place next month. I hope both assemblies will be blessed with success, and that their deliberations and counsels may promote the happiness of both nations.

In the state of Pennsylvania, government, notwithstanding our parties, goes on at present very smoothly, so that I have much less trouble in my station than was expected. Massachusetts has lately been disturbed by some disorderly people; but they are now quelled. The rest of the states go on pretty well, except some dissensions in Rhode island and Maryland respecting paper money. Mr. Paine whom you know, and who undertakes to deliver this letter to you, can give you full information of our affairs, and therefore I need not enlarge upon them. I beg leave to recommend him to your civilities. I have fulfilled all your commissions to the ladies here, who are much flattered by your kind remembrance of them. My family join in every sentiment of esteem and respect with, my dear friend, yours most affectionately, B. FRANKLIN.

To MESSRS. LES ABBE'S CHALUT AND ARNAUD.

DEAR FRIENDS, *Philadelphia, April* 17, 1787.

Your reflections, on our situation compared with that of many nations of Europe, are very sensible and just. Let me add, that only a virtuous people are capable of freedom. As nations become corrupt and vicious, they have more need of masters.

Our public affairs go on as well as can reasonably be expected after so great an overturning. We have had some disorders in different parts of the country, but we arrange them as they arise, and are daily mending and improving; so that I have no doubt but all will come right in time. Yours, B. FRANKLIN.

To M. LE MARQUIS DE LA FAYETTE.

DEAR FRIEND, *Philadelphia, April* 17, 1787.

I received the kind letter you did me the honour of writing in February 1786. The indolence of old age, and the perpetual teasing of too

much business, have made me so bad a correspondent, that I have hardly written a letter to any friend in Europe during the last twelvemonth: but as I have always a pleasure in hearing from them, which I cannot expect will be continued if I do not write to them, I again take up my pen, and begin with those whose correspondence is of the greatest value; among which I reckon that of the Marquis de la Fayette.

I was glad to hear of your safe return to Paris, after so long and fatiguing a journey. That is the place where your enlightened zeal for the welfare of our country can employ itself most to our advantage, and I know it is always at work, and indefatigable. Our enemies are as you observe very industrious in depreciating our national character. Their abuse sometimes provokes me, and I am almost ready to retaliate; but I have held my hand, though there is abundant room for recrimination; because I would do nothing that might hasten another quarrel by exasperating those who are still sore from their late disgraces. Perhaps it may be best that they should please themselves with fancying us weak, and poor, and divided, and friendless; they may then not be jealous of our growing strength, (which, since the peace, does really make rapid progress) and may be less intent on interrupting it.

I do not wonder that the Germans who know little of free constitutions, should be ready to suppose that such cannot support themselves. We think they may, and we hope to prove it. That there should be faults in our first sketches or plans of government is not surprising; rather, considering the times, and the circumstances under which they were formed, it is surprising that the faults are so few. Those in the general confederating articles, are now about to be considered in a convention called for that express purpose; these will indeed be the most difficult to rectify. Those of particular states will undoubtedly be rectified as their inconveniences shall by experience be made manifest. And whatever difference of sentiment there may be among us respecting particular regulations, the enthusiastic rejoicings with which the day of declared independence is annually celebrated, demonstrate the universal satisfaction of the people with the revolution and its grand principles.

I inclose the vocabulary you sent me, with the words of the Shawanese, and Delaware languages, which Colonel Harmar has procured for me. He is promised one more complete, which I shall send you as soon as it comes to my hands.

My grandson whom you so kindly enquire after, is at his estate in the Jersies, and amuses himself with cultivating his lands. I wish he would seriously make a business of it, and renounce all thoughts of public employment, for I think agricul-

ture the most honourable because the most independent of all professions. But I believe he hankers a little after Paris, or some other of the polished cities of Europe, thinking the society there preferable to what he meets with in the woods of Ancocas; as it certainly is. If he was now here, he would undoubtedly join with me and the rest of my family (who are much flattered by your remembrance of them) in best wishes for your health and prosperity, and that of your whole amiable fireside. You will allow an old friend of fourscore to say he *loves* your wife, when he adds and children, and prays God to bless them all. Adieu! and believe me ever, yours most affectionately, B. FRANKLIN.

To M. L' ABBE' MORELLET,[1] PARIS.

MY VERY DEAR FRIEND, *Philadelphia, April* 22, 1787.

I received, though long after they were written, your very agreeable favours of October 30, 85, and February 9, 86, with the pieces inclosed, productions of the Auteuil Academy of *belles lettres*. Your kind and friendly wishes and congratulations are extremely obliging. It gives me an infinite pleasure to find that I still retain a favourable place in the remembrance of the worthy and the good, whose delightful and instructive society I had the happiness of enjoying while I resided in France.

But though I could not leave that dear nation without regret, I certainly did right in coming home. I am here in my *niche* in my own house in the bosom of my family, my daughter and grand children all about me, among my old friends or the sons of my friends who equally respect me; and who all speak and understand the same language with me; and you know that if a man desires to be useful by the exercise of his mental faculties, he loses half their force when in a foreign country, where he can only express himself in a language with which he is not well acquainted. In short I enjoy here every opportunity of doing good, and every thing else I could wish for, except repose; and that I may soon expect either by the cessation of my office, which cannot last more than three years, or by ceasing to live.

I am of the same opinion with you respecting the freedom of commerce, in countries especially where direct taxes are practicable. This will be our case in time, when our wide-extended country fills up with inhabitants. But at present they are so widely settled, often five or six miles distant from one another in the back country, that the collection of a direct tax is almost impossible, the trouble of the collectors' going from house to house amounting to more than the value of the

[1] Member of the French Academy.

tax. Nothing can be better expressed than your sentiments are on this point, where you prefer liberty of trading, cultivating, manufacturing &c. even to civil liberty, this being affected but rarely, the other every hour. Our debt occasioned by the war being heavy, we are under the necessity of using imposts and every method we can think of to assist in raising a revenue to discharge it; but in sentiment we are well disposed to abolish duties on importation as soon as we possibly can afford to do so.

Whatever may be reported by the English in Europe, you may be assured that our people are almost unanimous in being satisfied with the revolution. Their unbounded respect for all who were principally concerned in it, whether as warriors or statesmen, and the enthusiastic joy with which the day of the declaration of independence is every where annually celebrated, are indubitable proof of this truth. In one or two of the states there have been some discontents on partial and local subjects; these may have been fomented, as the accounts of them are exaggerated, by our ancient enemies; but they are now nearly suppressed, and the rest of the states enjoy peace and good order, and flourish amazingly. The crops have been good for several years past, the price of country produce high, from foreign demand, and it fetches ready money; rents are high in our towns, which increase fast by new buildings; labourers and artizans have high wages well paid, and vast tracts of new land are continually clearing and rendered fit for cultivation. I am &c. B. F.

To Mr. Jordain,—London.

Dear Sir, *Philadelphia, May* 18, 1787.

I received your very kind letter of February 27, together with the cask of porter you have been so good as to send me. We have here at present what the French call *une assemblée des notables*, a convention composed of some of the principal people from the several states of our confederation. They did me the honor of dining with me last Wednesday, when the cask was broached, and its contents met with the most cordial reception and universal approbation. In short the company agreed unanimously that it was the best porter they had ever tasted. Accept my thanks, a poor return, but all I can make at present.

Your letter reminds me of many happy days we have passed together, and the dear friends with whom we passed them; some of whom, alas! have left us, and we must regret their loss, although our Hawkesworth[1] is become an adventurer in more happy regions; and our Stanley[2] gone, "where only his own *harmony* can be

[1] John Hawkesworth LL.D. Author of the Adventurer and compiler of the account of the Discoveries made in the South Seas, by Captain Cook.

[2] John Stanley an eminent musician and composer, became blind at the age of two years.

exceeded." You give me joy in telling me that you are "on the pinnacle of *content*." Without it no situation can be happy; with it, any. One means of becoming content with one's situation is the comparing it with a worse. Thus when I consider how many terrible diseases the human body is liable to, I comfort myself that only three incurable ones have fallen to my share, viz, the gout, the stone, and old age; and that these have not yet deprived me of my natural cheerfulness, my delight in books and enjoyment of social conversation.

I am glad to hear that Mr. Fitzmaurice is married and has an amiable lady and children. It is a better plan than that he once proposed, of getting Mrs. Wright to make him a wax-work wife to sit at the head of his table. For after all, wedlock is the natural state of man. A batchelor is not a complete human being. He is like the odd half of a pair of scissars, which has not yet found its fellow, and therefore is not even half so useful as they might be together.

I hardly know which to admire most; the wonderful discoveries made by Herschel,[1] or the indefatigable ingenuity by which he has been enabled to make them. Let us hope, my friend, that when free from these bodily embarrassments, we may roam together through some of the systems he has explored, conducted by some of our old companions already acquainted with them. Hawkesworth will enliven our progress with his cheerful sensible converse, and Stanley accompany the music of the spheres.

Mr. Watraaugh tells me, for I immediately enquired after her, that your daughter is alive and well. I remember her a most promising and beautiful child, and therefore do not wonder, that she is grown, as he says, a fine woman. God bless her and you, my dear friend, and every thing that pertains to you, is the sincere prayer of yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.
in his 82d year.

To GEORGE WHEATLEY Esq.

Philadelphia, May 18, 1787.

I received duly my good old friend's letter of the 19th of February. I thank you much for your notes on banks, they are just and solid as far as I can judge of them. Our bank here has met with great opposition, partly from envy, and partly from those who wish an emission of more paper money, which they think the bank influence prevents. But it has stood all attacks, and went on well notwithstanding the assembly repealed its charter. A new assembly has restored it; and the management is so prudent, that I have no doubt of its

[1] The Astronomer.

continuing to go on well: the dividend has never been less than six per cent, nor will that be augmented for some time, as the surplus profit is reserved to face accidents. The dividend of eleven per cent which was once made, was from a circumstance scarce avoidable. A new company was proposed; and prevented only by admitting a number of new partners. As many of the first set were averse to this and chose to withdraw, it was necessary to settle their accounts, so all were adjusted, the profits shared that had been accumulated, and the new and old proprietors jointly began on a new and equal footing. Their notes are always instantly paid on demand, and pass on all occasions as readily as silver, because they will always produce silver.

Your medallion is in good company, it is placed with those of Lord Chatham, Lord Camden, Marquis of Rockingham, Sir George Saville and some others who honoured me with a show of friendly regard when in England. I believe I have thanked you for it, but I thank you again.

I believe with you, that if our Plenipo is desirous of concluding a treaty of commerce, he may need patience. If I were in his place, and not otherwise instructed, I should be apt to say "take your own time, gentlemen." If the treaty cannot be made as much to your advantage as to ours, don't make it. I am sure the want of it, is not more to our disadvantage than to yours. Let the merchants on both sides treat with one another. *Laissez les faire.*

I have never considered attentively the Congress's scheme for Coining, and I have it not now at hand, so that at present I can say nothing to it. The chief uses of coining seem to be the ascertaining the fineness of the metals, and saving the time that would otherwise be spent in weighing to ascertain the quantity. But the convenience of fixed values to pieces is so great as to force the currency of some whose stamp is worn off that should have assured their fineness, and which are evidently not of half their due weight: the case at present with the sixpences in England, which one with another do not weigh three-pence.

You are now 78 and I am 82; you tread fast upon my heels: but though you have more strength and spirit, you cannot come up with me till I stop, which must now be soon; for I am grown so old as to have buried most of the friends of my youth, and I now often hear persons whom I knew when children called *old* Mr. such-a-one, to distinguish them from their sons now men grown and in business; so that by living twelve years beyond David's period, I seem to have intruded myself into the company of posterity, when I ought to have been a-bed and asleep. Yet had I gone at seventy it would have cut off twelve of the most active years of my life,

employed too in matters of the greatest importance; but whether I have been doing good or mischief is for time to discover. I only know that I intended well, and I hope all will end well.

Be so good as to present my affectionate respects to Dr. Riley. I am under great obligations to him, and shall write to him shortly. It will be a pleasure to him to know that my malady does not grow sensibly worse, and that is a great point: for it has always been so tolerable, as not to prevent my enjoying the pleasures of society, and being cheerful in conversation; I owe this in a great measure to his good counsels.

Adieu my dear friend, and believe me ever yours most affectionately, B. F.

To Count de Buffon, Paris.

Dear Sir, *Philadelphia, Nov.* 19, 1787.

I am honoured by your letter desiring to know by what means I am relieved in a disorder, with which you are also unfortunately afflicted. I have tried all the noted prescriptions for *diminishing* the stone, without perceiving any good effect. But observing temperance in eating, avoiding wine and cyder, and using daily the dumb bell, which exercises the upper part of the body without much moving the parts in contact with the stone, I think I have prevented its *increase.* As the roughness of the stone lacerates a little the neck of the bladder, I find that when the urine happens to be sharp, I have much pain in making water and frequent urgencies. For relief under this circumstance, I take, going to bed, the bigness of a pigeon's egg of jelly of blackberries: the receipt for making it is inclosed. While I continue to do this every night I am generally easy the day following, making water pretty freely, and with long intervals. I wish most sincerely that this simple remedy may have the same happy effect with you. Perhaps currant jelly, or the jelly of apples, or of raspberries, may be equally serviceable; for I suspect the virtue of the jelly may lie principally in the boiled sugar which is in some degree candied by the boiling of the jelly. Wishing you for your own sake much more ease, and for the sake of mankind many more years, I remain with the greatest esteem and respect, dear Sir, your most obedient and affectionate servant, B. F.

To * * *.

Philadelphia, Dec. 15, 1787.

I hope the disorders in Brabant and Holland may be rectified without bloodshed. But I fear the impending war with the Turks, if not prevented

by prudent negociation, may in its consequences involve great part of Europe. I confide however that France and England will preserve their present peace with each other, notwithstanding some contrary appearances: for I think that they have both of them *too much sense* to go to war without an important cause, as well as too *little money* at present.

As to the projected conquest from Turkey, I apprehend, that if the emperor and empress would make some use of arithmetic, and calculate what annual revenues may be expected from the country they want, should they acquire it, and then offer the grand Signior a hundred times that annual revenue, to be paid down for an amicable purchase of it; it would be his interest to accept the offer, as well as theirs to make it, rather than a war for it should take place; since a war to acquire that territory and to retain it, will cost both parties much more, perhaps ten times more, than such sum of purchase money. But the hope of glory and the ambition of princes are not subject to arithmetical calculation.

My best wishes attend you; being with great esteem, Sir, your most obedient and most humble servant, B. FRANKLIN.

To M. LE VEILLARD, OF PASSY.

MY DEAR FRIEND, *Philadelphia, Feb.* 17, 1788.

I received your kind letter of June 23 by Mr. Saugrain, and it is the last of yours that is come to my hands. As you have so much leisure, and love writing, I cannot think you have been so long silent; you who are so good as to love me, and who know how much pleasure your letters always afford me. I therefore rather suspect you may probably have written something too freely concerning public affairs, and that your letters may be arrested in your post office, and yourself lodged in the Bastille. You see I imagine any thing however extravagant rather than suppose, (as your letters too often do) that my friends forget me.

I find Mr. Saugrain to answer well the good character you give of him, and shall with pleasure render him any services in my power. He is now gone down the Ohio, to reconnoitre that country.

I should have proceeded in the history you mention,[1] if I could well have avoided accepting the Chair of President for this third and last year: to which I was again elected by the *unanimous* voice of council and general assembly in

[1] The Memoirs of his own Life, to the continuance of which all his friends who knew the importance of such a History wished him anxiously to apply.

November. If I live to see this year expire I may enjoy some leisure, which I promise you to employ in the work you do me the honour to urge so earnestly.

I sent you with my last a copy of the new constitution proposed for the United States by the late general convention. I sent one also to our excellent friend the Duke de la Rochefoucauld. I attended the business of the convention faithfully for four months. Enclosed you have the last speech I made in it.[1] Six States have already adopted the constitution, and there is now little doubt of its being accepted by a sufficient number to carry it into execution, if not immediately by the whole. It has however met with great opposition in some States, for we are at present a nation of politicians. And though there is a general dread of giving too much *power* to our *governors*, I think we are more in danger from too little obedience in the *governed*.

We shall, as you suppose, have imposts on trade, and custom-houses, not because other nations have them, but because we cannot at present do without them. We want to discharge our public debt occasioned by the late war. Direct taxes are not so easily levied on the scantily settled inhabitants of our wide extended country; and what is paid in the price of merchandize is less felt by the consumer, and less the cause of complaint. When we are out of debt we may leave our trade free, for our ordinary charges of government will not be great.

Where there is a free government, and the people make their own laws by their representatives, I see no injustice in their obliging one another to take their own paper money. It is no more so than compelling a man by law to take his own note. But it is unjust to pay strangers with such money against their will. The making of paper money with such a sanction is however a folly, since although you may by law oblige a citizen to take it for his goods, you cannot fix his prices; and his liberty of rating them as he pleases, which is the same thing as setting what value he pleases on your money, defeats your sanction.

I have been concerned to hear of the troubles in the internal government of the country I love;[2] and hope some good may come out of them; and that they may end without mischief.

In your letter to my grandson you asked some questions that had an appearance as if you meditated a visit to us. Nothing in this world would give me greater pleasure, than to receive and embrace here the whole family. But it is too great an happiness to be expected. This family all join with me in best wishes of every

[1] See Memoirs of his Life. [2] France.

felicity to you and yours; and I remain with unalterable and great esteem and affection, my dear friend, yours most sincerely, B. FRANKLIN.

TO THE EDITORS OF THE PENNSYLVANIA GAZETTE,
On the Abuse of the Press.

Messrs. HALL and SELLERS,

I lately heard a remark, that on examination of the *Pennsylvania Gazette* for fifty years, from its commencement, it appeared that during that long period, scarce one libellous piece had ever appeared in it. This generally chaste conduct of your paper is much to its reputation; for it has long been the opinion of sober judicious people, that nothing is more likely to endanger the liberty of the press, than the abuse of that liberty, by employing it in personal accusation, detraction, and calumny. The excesses some of our papers have been guilty of in this particular, have set this State in a bad light abroad, as appears by the following letter, which I wish you to publish, not merely to show your own disapprobation of the practice, but as a caution to others of the profession throughout the United States. For I have seen an European newspaper, in which the editor, who had been charged with frequently calumniating the Americans, justifies himself by saying, "that he had published nothing disgraceful to us, which he had not taken from our own printed papers." I am, &c. A. B.

DEAR FRIEND, *New York, March* 30, 1788.

My gout has at length left me, after five months' painful confinement. It afforded me however the leisure to read, or hear read, all the packets of your newspapers which you so kindly sent for my amusement.

Mrs. W. has partaken of it; she likes to read the advertisements; but she remarks some kind of *inconsistency* in the announcing so many diversions for almost every evening in the week, and such quantities to be sold of expensive superfluities, fineries, and luxuries *just imported*, in a country, that at the same time fills its papers with complaints of *hard times*, and want of money. I tell her that such complaints are common to all times and all countries, and were made even in Solomon's time; when as we are told, silver was as plenty in Jerusalem as the stones in the street, and yet even then, there were people that grumbled, so as to incur this censure from that knowing prince. *Say not thou that the former times were better than these; for thou dost not enquire rightly concerning that matter.*

But the *inconsistence* that strikes me the most is that between the name of your city, *Philadelphia, brotherly love,* and the spirit of rancour, malice and *hatred* that breathes in its newspapers. For I learn from those papers, that your State is divided into parties, that each party ascribes all the public operations of the other to vicious motives; that they do not even suspect one another of the smallest degree of honesty; that the antifederalists are such, merely from the fear of losing power, places, or emoluments which they have in possession or in expectation; that the federalists are a set of *conspirators,* who aim at establishing a tyranny over the persons and property of their countrymen, and to live in splendour on the plunder of the people. I learn too that your justices of the peace, though chosen by their neighbours, make a villainous trade of their office, and promote discord to augment fees, and fleece their electors; and that this would not be mended by placing the choice in the executive council, who with interested or party views are continually making as improper appointments; witness a "*petty fiddler, sycophant and scoundrel*" appointed Judge of the Admiralty; "*an old woman and fomenter of sedition*" to be another of the Judges, and "*a Jeffries*" Chief Justice, &c. &c.; with "*two harpies*" the Comptroller and Naval Officers to prey upon the merchants and deprive them of their property by force of arms, &c. I am informed also by these papers, that your General Assembly, though the annual choice of the people, shows no regard to their rights, but from sinister views or ignorance makes laws in direct violation of the constitution, to divest the inhabitants of their property and give it to strangers and intruders; and that the council either fearing the resentment of their constituents, or plotting to enslave them, had projected to disarm them, and given orders for that purpose; and finally, that your President, the unanimous joint choice of the Council and Assembly, is "*an old rogue,*" who gave his assent to the federal constitution merely to avoid refunding money he had purloined from the United States. There is indeed a good deal of manifest *inconsistency* in all this, and yet a stranger seeing it in your own prints, though he does not believe it all, may probably believe enough of it to conclude that Pennsylvania is peopled by a set of the most unprincipled, wicked, rascally, and quarrelsome scoundrels upon the face of the globe. I have sometimes indeed suspected, that those papers are the manufacture of foreign enemies among you, who write with the view of disgracing your country, and making you appear contemptible and detestable all the world over: but, then I wonder at the indiscretion of your printers in publishing such writings! There is however one of your *inconsistences* that consoles me a little, which is, that though *living,* you give one another the characters of devils; *dead* you are all angels! It is

delightful when any of you die, to read what good husbands, good fathers, good friends, good citizens, and good Christians you were, concluding with a scrap of poetry that places you, with certainty, every one in heaven. So that I think Pennsylvania a good country *to die in*, though a very bad one to live in.

To M. LE VEILLARD.

MY DEAR FRIEND, *Philadelphia, April* 22, 1788.

I received but a few days since your favour of November 30, 1787, in which you continue to urge me to finish the Memoirs. My three years of service will expire in October, when a new President must be chosen; and I had the project of retiring then to my grandson's villa in New Jersey, where I might be free from the interruption of visits, in order to complete that work for your satisfaction; for in this city my time is so cut to pieces by friends and strangers, that I have sometimes envied the prisoners in the Bastille: but considering now the little remnant of life I have left, the accidents that may happen between this and October, and your earnest desire, I have come to a resolution to proceed in that work to-morrow, and continue it daily till finished, which if my health permits, may be in the course of the ensuing summer. As it goes on I will have a copy made for you, and you may expect to receive a part by the next packet.

It is very possible, as you suppose, that all the articles of the proposed new government will not remain unchanged after the first meeting of the Congress. I am of opinion with you, that the *two* chambers were not necessary, and I disliked some other articles that are in, and wished for some that are not in the proposed plan; I nevertheless hope it may be adopted, though I should have nothing to do with the execution of it, being determined to quit all public business with my present employment. At 83 one certainly has a right to *ambition* repose.

We are not ignorant that the duties paid at the custom-house on the importation of foreign goods are finally reimbursed by the consumer, but we impose them as the easiest way of levying a tax from those consumers. If our new country was as closely inhabited as your old one, we might without much difficulty collect a land-tax, that would be sufficient for all purposes: but where farms are at five or six miles distant from each other, as they are in a great part of our country, the going of the collectors from house to house to demand the taxes, and being obliged to call more than once for the same tax, makes the trouble of collecting in many cases exceed the value of the sum collected. Things that are practicable in one

country are not always so in another, where circumstances differ. Our duties are however generally so small as to give little temptation to smuggling.

Believe me ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately, B. FRANKLIN.

To MADAME LAVOISIER.

Philadelphia, Oct. 23, 1788.

I have a long time been disabled from writing to my dear friend by a severe fit of the gout, or I should sooner have returned my thanks for her very kind present of the portrait, which she has herself done me the honour to make of me. It is allowed by those who have seen it to have great merit as a picture in every respect; but what particularly endears it to me is the hand that drew it. Our English enemies when they were in possession of this city and my house, made a prisoner of my portrait, and carried it off with them, leaving that of its companion, my wife, by itself, a kind of widow. You have replaced the husband, and the lady seems to smile as well pleased.

It is true, as you observe, that I enjoy here every thing that a reasonable mind can desire, a sufficiency of income, a comfortable habitation of my own building, having all the conveniences I could imagine; a dutiful and affectionate daughter to nurse and take care of me, a number of promising grandchildren, some old friends still remaining to converse with, and more respect, distinction, and public honours than I can possibly merit; these are the blessings of God, and depend on his continued goodness: yet all do not make me forget Paris and the nine years' happiness I enjoyed there, in the sweet society of a people whose conversation is instructive, whose manners are highly pleasing, and who above all the nations of the world, have in the greatest perfection the art of making themselves beloved by strangers. And now, even in my sleep, I find, that the scenes of all my pleasant dreams are laid in that city, or in its neighbourhood.

I like much young M. Dupont. He appears a very sensible and valuable man, and I think his father will have a great deal of satisfaction in him.

Please to present my thanks to M. Lavoisier for the *Nomenclature Chimique* he has been so good as to send me, (it must be a very useful book) and assure him of my great and sincere esteem and attachment. My best wishes attend you both, and I think I cannot wish you and him greater happiness than a long continuance of the connexion.

With great regard and affection, I have the honour to be, my dear friend, your most obliged and most obedient humble servant, B. FRANKLIN.

To Dr. Ingenhauz.

October 24, 1788.

"You have always been kind enough to interest yourself in what relates to my health: I ought therefore to acquaint you with what appears to me something curious respecting it: you may remember the cutaneous malady, I formerly complained of, and for which you and Dr. Pringle favoured me with prescriptions and advice. It vexed me near fourteen years, and was the beginning of this year as bad as ever, covering almost my whole body except my face and hands: when a fit of the gout came on, without very much pain, but a swelling in both feet, which at last appeared also in both knees; and then in my hands. As these swellings increased and extended, the other malady diminished, and at length disappeared entirely. Those swellings have some time since begun to fall, and are now almost gone; perhaps the cutaneous may return, or perhaps it is worn out. I may hereafter let you know what happens. I am on the whole much weaker than when it began to leave me. But possibly that may be the effect of age, for I am now near 83, the age of commencing decrepitude.

I grieve at the wars Europe is engaged in, and wish they were ended; for I fear even the victors will be losers. I am ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. Franklin.

P. S. Our public affairs are drawing towards a settlement. I have served out the three years term of my Presidentship, limited by the constitution; and being determined to engage no more in public business, I hope, if health permits, to be a better correspondent. We have no philosophical news here at present, except that a boat moved by a steam engine, rows itself against tide in our river, and it is apprehended the construction may be so simplified and improved as to become generally useful."

To B. Vaughan, Esq.

October 24, 1788.

——— "Having now finished my term in the Presidentship, and resolving to engage no more in public affairs, I hope to be a better correspondent for the little time I have to live. I am recovering from a long continued gout, and am diligently employed in writing the History of my Life, to the doing of which the persuasions contained in your letter of January 31, 1783,[1]

[1] See Memoirs of the Life. Page 59.

have not a little contributed. I am now in the year 1756 just before I was sent to England. To shorten the work, as well as for other reasons, I omit all facts and transactions that may not have a tendency to benefit the young reader, by showing him from my example, and my success in emerging from poverty, and acquiring some degree of wealth, power, and reputation, the advantages of certain modes of conduct which I observed, and of avoiding the errors which were prejudicial to me. If a writer can judge properly of his own work, I fancy on reading over what is already done, that the book may be found entertaining, interesting, and useful, more so than I expected when I began it. If my present state of health continues, I hope to finish it this winter: when done you shall have a manuscript copy of it, that I may obtain from your judgment and friendship, such remarks as may contribute to its improvement.

The violence of our party debates about the new constitution seems much abated, indeed almost extinct, and we are getting fast into good order. I kept out of those disputes pretty well, having wrote only one little piece, which I send you inclosed.

I regret the immense quantity of misery brought upon mankind by this Turkish war; and I am afraid the King of Sweden may burn his fingers by attacking Russia. When will princes learn arithmetick enough to calculate if they want pieces of one another's territory, how much cheaper it would be to buy them, than to make war for them, even though they were to give an hundred years purchase? But if glory cannot be valued, and therefore the wars for it cannot be subject to arithmetical calculation so as to show their advantage or disadvantage, at least wars for trade, which have gain for their object, may be proper subjects for such computation; and a trading nation as well as a single trader ought to calculate the probabilities of profit and loss, before engaging in any considerable adventure. This however nations seldom do, and we have had frequent instances of their spending more money in wars for acquiring or securing branches of commerce, that an hundred years' profit or the full enjoyment of them can compensate.

Remember me affectionately to good Dr. Price and to the honest heretic Dr. Priestly. I do not call him *honest* by way of distinction; for I think all the heretics I have known have been virtuous men. They have the virtue of fortitude or they would not venture to own their heresy; and they cannot afford to be deficient in any of the other virtues, as that would give advantage to their many enemies; and they have not like orthodox sinners, such a number of friends to excuse or justify them. Do

not, however mistake me. It is not to my good friend's heresy that I impute his honesty. On the contrary, 'tis his honesty that has brought upon him the character of heretic. I am ever, my dear friend, yours sincerely, B. FRANKLIN.

To MRS. PARTRIDGE.

Philadelphia, Nov. 25, 1788.

You tell me our poor friend Ben Kent is gone, I hope to the regions of the blessed; or at least to some place where souls are prepared for those regions! I found my hope on this, that though not so orthodox as you and I, he was an honest man, and had his virtues. If he had any hypocrisy, it was of that inverted kind, with which a man is not so bad as he seems to be. And with regard to future bliss, I cannot help imagining that multitudes of the zealously orthodox of different sects, who at the last day may flock together, in hopes of seeing each other damned, will be disappointed, and obliged to rest content with their own salvation. Yours, &c. B. FRANKLIN.

To MRS. MECOM, BOSTON.[1]

Philadelphia, Nov. 26, 1788.

I never see any Boston newspapers. You mention there being often something in them to do me honour. I am obliged to them. On the other hand, some of our papers here are endeavouring to disgrace me. I have long been accustomed to receive more blame as well as more praise than I have deserved. 'Tis the lot of every public man. And I leave one account to balance the other.

As you observe, there was no *d——n your souls* in the story of the poker when I told it. The late dresser of it was probably the same, or perhaps of kin to him, who in relating a dispute that happened between Queen Anne and the Archbishop of Canterbury concerning a vacant mitre, which the Queen was for bestowing on a person the Archbishop thought unworthy, made both the Queen and the Archbishop swear three or four thumping oaths in every sentence of the discussion; and the Archbishop at last gained his point. One present at the tale being surprised, said, But did the Queen and the Archbishop swear so at one another? O! no, no, said the relator; that is only my way of telling the story. Yours, &c. B. FRANKLIN.

[1] Dr. Franklin's sister.

To Mr. Small.

Dear Friend, *Philadelphia, Feb.* 17, 1789.

I have just received your kind letter of Nov. 29, and am much obliged by your friendly attention in sending me the receipt, which on occasion I may make trial of; but the stone I have being a large one, as I find by the weight it falls with when I turn in bed, I have no hope of its being dissoluble by any medicine; and having been for some time past pretty free from pain, I am afraid of tampering. I congratulate you on the escape you had by voiding the one you mention, that was as big as a kidney bean; had it been retained it might soon have become too large to pass, and proved the cause of much pain at times, as mine has been to me.

Having served my time of three years as President, I have now renounced all public business, and enjoy the *otium cum dignitate.* My friends indulge me with their frequent visits, which I have now leisure to receive and enjoy. The Philosophical Society, and the society for Political Enquiries meet at my house, which I have enlarged by additional building, that affords me a large room for those meetings, another over it for my library now very considerable, and over all some lodging rooms. I have seven promising grand-children by my daughter who play with and amuse me, and she is a kind attentive nurse to me when I am at any time indisposed; so that I pass my time as agreeably as at my age (83) a man may well expect, and have little to wish for, except a more easy exit than my malady seems to threaten.

The deafness you complain of gives me concern, as if great it must diminish considerably your pleasure in conversation. If moderate you may remedy it easily and readily, by putting your thumb and fingers behind your ear, pressing it outwards, and enlarging it as it were, with the hollow of your hand. By an exact experiment I found that I could hear the tick of a watch at forty five feet distance by this means, which was barely audible at twenty feet without it. The experiment was made at midnight when the house was still.

I am glad you have sent those directions respecting ventilation to the Edinburgh Society. I hope you have added an account of the experience you had of it at Minorca. If they do not print your paper, send it to me, and it shall be in the third volume which we are about to publish of our transactions.

Mrs. Hewson joins with us in best wishes for your health and happiness. Her eldest son has gone through his studies at our college, and takes his degree. The

youngest is still there, and will be graduated this summer. My grandson presents his respects; and I am ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately, B. F.

You never mention the receipt of any letters from me. I wish to know if they come to hand, particularly my last inclosing the *apologue*. You mention some of my old friends being dead, but not their names.

To Mrs. Greene.

Dear Friend, *Philadelphia, March* 2, 1789.

Having now done with public affairs, which have hitherto taken up so much of my time, I shall endeavour to enjoy during the small remainder of life that is left to me some of the pleasures of conversing with my old friends by writing, since their distance prevents my hope of seeing them again.

I received one of the bags of sweet corn you was so good as to send me a long time since, but the other never came to hand; even the letter mentioning it, though dated December 10, 1787, has been above a year on its way, for I received it but about two weeks since from Baltimore in Maryland. The corn I did receive was excellent, and gave me great pleasure. Accept my hearty thanks.

I am as you suppose in the above mentioned old letter much pleased to hear that my young Friend Ray is "smart in the farming way" and makes such substantial fences. I think agriculture the most honourable of all employments, being the most independent. The farmer has no need of popular favour, nor the favour of the great. The success of his crops depending only on the blessing of God upon his honest industry. I congratulate your good spouse, that he as well as myself is now free from public cares, and that he can bend his whole attention to his farming, which will afford him both profit and pleasure; a business which nobody knows better how to manage with advantage. I am too old to follow printing again myself, but loving the business, I have brought up my grandson Benjamin to it, and have built and furnished a printing house for him, which he now manages under my eye. I have great pleasure in the rest of my grand children who are now in number eight and all promising, the youngest only six months old but shows signs of great good nature. My friends here are numerous, and I enjoy as much of their conversation as I can reasonably wish; and I have as much health and cheerfulness as can well be expected at my age, now eighty three. Hitherto this long life has been tolerably happy, so that if I were allowed to live it over again, I should make no objection, only wishing for leave to do, what authors do in a second

edition of their works, correct some of my errata. Among the felicities of my life I reckon your friendship, which I shall remember with pleasure as long as that life lasts, being ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately, B. FRANKLIN.

To Miss Catherine Louisa Shipley.

Philadelphia, April 27, 1789.

It is only a few days since the kind letter of my dear young friend, dated December 24, came to my hands. I had before in the public papers met with the afflicting news that letter contained. That excellent man has then left us!—his departure is a loss not to his family and friends only, but to his nation, and to the world: for he was intent on doing good, had wisdom to devise the means, and talents to promote them. His sermon before the society for propagating the gospel, and "*his speech intended to be spoken,*" are proofs of his ability as well as his humanity. Had his counsels in those pieces been attended to by the ministers, how much bloodshed might have been prevented, and how much expence and disgrace to the nation avoided!

Your reflections on the constant calmness and composure attending his death are very sensible. Such instances seem to show, that the good sometimes enjoy in dying a foretaste of the happy state they are about to enter.

According to the course of years I should have quitted this world long before him: I shall however not be long in following. I am now in my eighty fourth year, and the last year has considerably enfeebled me; so that I hardly expect to remain another. You will then, my dear friend, consider this as probably the last line to be received from me, and as a taking leave. Present my best and most sincere respects to your good mother, and love to the rest of the family, to whom I wish all happiness; and believe me to be, while I *do* live, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

To the Rev. Dr. Price.

MY VERY DEAR FRIEND, *Philadelphia, May* 31, 1789.

I lately received your kind letter, inclosing one from Miss Kitty Shipley, informing me of the good bishop's decease, which afflicted me greatly. My friends drop off one after another, when my age and infirmities prevent my making new ones, and if I still retained the necessary activity and ability, I hardly see among the existing generation where I could make them of equal goodness. So that the longerI live I must expect to be the more wretched. As we draw

nearer the conclusion of life, nature furnishes with more helps to wean us from it, among which one of the most powerful is the loss of such dear friends.

I send you with this the two volumes of our transactions, as I forget whether you had the first before. If you had, you will please to give this to the French Ambassador, requesting his conveyance of it to the good Duke de la Rochfoucault.

My best wishes attend you, being ever with sincere and great esteem, my dear friend, yours most affectionately, B. FRANKLIN.

To B. VAUGHAN, ESQ.

MY DEAREST FRIEND, *Philadelphia, June* 3, 1789.

I received your kind letter of March 4, and wish I may be able to complete what you so earnestly desire, the Memoirs of my life. But of late I am so interrupted by extreme pain, which obliges me to have recourse to opium, that between the effects of both, I have but little time in which I can write any thing. My grandson however is copying what is done, which will be sent to you for your opinion by the next vessel; and not merely for your opinion but for your advice; for I find it a difficult task to speak decently and properly of one's own conduct; and I feel the want of a judicious friend to encourage me in scratching out.

I have condoled sincerely with the Bishop of St. Asaph's family. He was an excellent man. Losing our friends thus one by one, is the tax we pay for long living; and it is indeed a heavy one!

I have not seen the King of Prussia's posthumous works; what you mention makes me desirous to have them. Please to mention it to your brother William, and that I request he would add them to the books I have desired him to buy for me.

Our new government is now in train, and seems to promise well. But events are in the hand of God! I am ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

To MR. WRIGHT,—LONDON.

DEAR FRIEND, *Philadelphia, Nov.* 4, 1789.

I received your kind letter of July the 31st, which gave me great pleasure, as it informed me of the welfare both of yourself and your good lady, to whom please to present my respects. I thank you for the epistle of your yearly meeting, and for the card (a specimen of printing) which was inclosed.

We have now had one session of congress which was conducted under our new constitution, and with as much general satisfaction as could reasonably be expected. I wish the struggle in France may end as happily for that nation.—We are now in the full enjoyment of our new government for *eleven* of the states, and it is generally thought that North Carolina is about to join it. Rhode island will probably take longer time for consideration.—We have had a most plentiful year for the fruits of the earth, and our people seem to be recovering fast from the extravagance and idle habits which the war had introduced; and to engage seriously in the contrary habits, of temperance, frugality, and industry, which give the most pleasing prospect of future national felicity. Your merchants however, are I think imprudent in crowding in upon us such quantities of goods for sale here, which are not written for by ours, and are beyond the faculties of this country to consume, in any reasonable time. This surplus of goods is therefore to raise present money, sent to the vendues, or auction houses, of which we have six or seven in and near this city; where they are sold frequently for less than prime cost, to the great loss of the indiscreet adventurers. Our newspapers are doubtless to be seen at your coffee houses near the exchange: in their advertisements you may observe the constancy and quantity of these kind of sales; as well as the quantity of goods imported by our regular traders. I see in your English newspapers frequent mention of our being out of credit with you; to us it appears that we have abundantly too much, and that your exporting merchants are rather out of their senses.

I wish success to your endeavours for obtaining an abolition of the slave trade. The epistle from your yearly meeting for the year 1758, was not the *first sowing* of the good seed you mention; for I find by an old pamphlet in my possession, that GEORGE KEITH near an hundred years since wrote a paper against the practice, said to be "given forth by the appointment of the meeting held by him, at Philip James's house in the city of Philadelphia, about the year 1693; wherein a strict charge was given to friends, "that they should set their negroes at liberty after some reasonable time of service &c. &c." And about the year 1728, or 29, I myself printed a book for Ralph Sandyford, another of your friends of this city, against keeping negroes in slavery; two editions of which he distributed gratis. And about the year 1736 I printed another book on the same subject for Benjamin Lay, who also professed being one of your friends, and he distributed the books chiefly among them. By these instances it appears that the seed was indeed sown in the good ground of your profession, (though much earlier than the time you mention) and its springing up to effect at last, though so late, is some confirmation

of Lord Bacon's observation, that *a good motion never dies;* and may encourage us in making such; though hopeless of their taking immediate effect.

I doubt whether I shall be able to finish my Memoirs, and if I finish them whether they will be proper for publication: you seem to have too high an opinion of them, and to expect too much from them.

I think you are right in preferring a mixed form of government for your country, under its present circumstances; and if it were possible for you to reduce the enormous salaries and emoluments of great offices (which are at bottom the source of all your violent factions) that form might be conducted more quietly and happily: but I am afraid that none of your factions, when they get uppermost, will ever have virtue enough to reduce those salaries and emoluments, but will rather chuse to enjoy them. I am, my dear friend, yours very affectionately, B. FRANKLIN.

To DR. RUSH.

Philadelphia,

MY DEAR FRIEND, [without date, but supposed to be in 1789.]

During our long acquaintance you have shown many instances of your regard for me, yet I must now desire you to add one more to the number, which is, that if you publish your ingenious discourse on the *moral sense,* you will totally omit and suppress that most extravagant encomium on your friend Franklin, which hurt me exceedingly in the unexpected hearing, and will mortify me beyond conception, if it should appear from the press. Confiding in your compliance with this earnest request, I am ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately, B. F.

To SAMUEL MORE, ESQ.

DEAR SIR, *Philadelphia, Nov. 5,* 1789.

I received your favour of July 25, but had no opportunity of showing any civility to the bearer whom you mention as coming under the auspices of William Franklin, Esq. as he did not shew himself to me.

I am obliged by your kind enquiries after my health, which is still tolerably good, the stone excepted; my constitution being such as, if it were not for that malady, might have held out yet some years longer.

I hope the fire of liberty which you mention as spreading itself over Europe, will act upon the inestimable rights of man, as common fire does upon gold; purify without destroying them; so that a lover of liberty may find *a country* in any part of Christendom!

I see with pleasure in the public prints, that our Society [1] is still kept up and flourishes. I was an early member; for when Mr. Shipley sent me a list of the subscribers, they were but seventy; and though I had no expectation then of ever going to England, and acting with them, I sent a contribution of twenty guineas; in consideration of which the Society were afterwards pleased to consider me a member.

I wish to the exertions of your manufacturers, who are generally excellent; and to the spirit and enterprize of your merchants, who are famed for fair and honourable dealing, all the success they merit in promoting the prosperity of your country.

I am glad our friend Small enjoys so much health, and his faculties so perfectly, as I perceive he does by his letters. I know not whether he is yet returned from his visit to Scotland, and therefore give you the trouble of the inclosed. My best wishes attend you, being ever, dear sir, your most obedient servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

To Mr. Small.

DEAR SIR, *Philadelphia, Nov. 5*, 1789.

I received your several favours of April 23, May 9, and June 2, together with the manuscript concerning Ventilation, which will be inserted in our next volume.

I have long been of your opinion, that your legal provision for the poor is a very great evil operating as it does to the encouragement of idleness. We have followed your example, and begin now to see our error; and I hope shall reform it.—I find by your letters that every man has patience enough to bear calmly and coolly the injuries done to other people: you have perfectly forgiven the Royalists, and you seem to wonder that we should still retain any resentment against them for their joining with the savages to burn our houses, and murder and scalp our friends, our wives, and our children. I forget who it was that said, "we are commanded to forgive our enemies, but we are no where commanded to forgive our friends;" certain it is however that atrocious injuries done to us by our friends are naturally more deeply resented than the same done by enemies. They have left us to live under the government of their King in England and Nova Scotia. We do not miss them, nor wish their return; nor do we envy them their present happiness.—The

[1] The London Society for promoting Arts, Manufactures, and Commerce, of which Mr. More was Secretary.

accounts you give me of the great prospects you have respecting your manufactures, agriculture, and commerce, are pleasing to me, for I still love England and wish it prosperity.

You tell me that the government of France is abundantly punished for its treachery to England in assisting us; you might also have remarked that the government of England had been punished for its treachery to France, in assisting the Corsicans, and in seizing her ships in time of full peace, without any previous declaration of war. I believe governments are pretty near equal in honesty, and cannot with much propriety praise their own in preference to that of their neighbours.

You do me too much honour in naming me with *Timoleon*. I am like him only in retiring from my public lubours, which indeed my stone, and other infirmities of age, have made indispensably necessary.

I hope you are by this time returned from your visit to your native country, and that the journey has given a firmer consistence to your health.

Mr. Penn's property in this country which you enquire about, is still immensely great; and I understand he has received ample compensation in England for the part he lost.

I think you have made a happy choice of rural amusements; the protection of the bees, and the destruction of the hop insect. I wish success to your experiments, and shall be glad to hear the result. Your Theory of Insects appears the most ingenious and plausible of any that have hitherto been proposed by philosophers.

Our new constitution is now established with *eleven* States, and the accession of a twelfth is soon expected. We have had one session of Congress under it, which was conducted with remarkable prudence, and a good deal of unanimity. Our late harvests were plentiful, and our produce still fetches a good price, through an abundant foreign demand, and the flourishing state of our commerce. I am ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately, B. FRANKLIN.

To MR. LE ROY, OF PARIS.

Philadelphia, Nov. 13, 1789.

'Tis now more than a year since I have heard from my dear friend Le Roy. What can be the reason? Are you still living? Or have the mob of Paris mistaken the head of a monopoliser of knowledge, for a monopoliser of corn, and paraded it about the streets upon a pole?

Great part of the news we have had from Paris, for near a year past, has been very afflicting. I sincerely wish and pray it may all end well and happily both for the king and the nation. The voice of *Philosophy* I apprehend can hardly be heard among those tumults. If any thing material in that way had occurred, I am persuaded you would have acquainted me with it. However pray let me hear from you a little oftener; for though the distance is great, and the means of conveying letters not very regular, a year's silence between friends must needs give uneasiness.

Our new Constitution is now established, and has an appearance that promises permanency; but in this world nothing can be said to be certain, except death and taxes!

My health continues much as it has been, for some time, except that I grow thinner and weaker, so that I cannot expect to hold out much longer.

My respects to your good brother, and to our friends of the Academy, which always has my best wishes for its prosperity and glory. Adieu my dear friend, and believe me ever yours most affectionately, B. FRANKLIN.

To DAVID HARTLEY, ESQ.

MY VERY DEAR FRIEND, *Philadelphia, Dec.* 4, 1789.

I received your favour of August last. Your kind condolences, on the painful state of my health, are very obliging. I am thankful to God however that among the numerous ills human life is subject to, one only of any importance is fallen to my lot; and that so late as almost to insure that it can be but of short duration.

The convulsions in France are attended with some disagreeable circumstances; but if by the struggle she obtains and secures for the nation its future liberty, and a good constitution, a few years enjoyment of those blessings will amply repair all the damages their acquisition may have occasioned. God grant that not only the love of liberty, but a thorough knowledge of the rights of man, may pervade all the nations of the earth, so that a philosopher may set his foot any where on its surface, and say, this is my country!—Your wishes for a cordial and perpetual friendship between Britain and her ancient colonies are manifested continually in every one of your letters to me; something of my disposition on the same subject may appear to you in casting your eye over the inclosed paper.[1] I do not by this opportunity send you any of our Gazettes; because the postage from Liverpool would be more than

[1] Uncertain what paper.

they are worth. I can now only add my best wishes of every kind of felicity for the three amiable Hartleys, to whom I have the honour of being an affectionate friend and most obedient humble servant, B. FRANKLIN.

To MRS. MECOM, THE WRITER'S SISTER AT BOSTON.

DEAR SISTER, *Philadelphia, Dec.* 17, 1789.

You tell me you are desired by an acquaintance to ask my opinion whether the general circumstances mentioned in the history of Baron Trenck are founded in fact; to which I can only answer, that of the greatest part of those circumstances, the scene being laid in Germany, I must consequently be very ignorant; but of what he says, as having passed in France, between the ministers of that country, himself, and me, I can speak positively that it is *founded in falsehood*, and that the fact can only serve to *con*found, as I never saw him in that country, nor ever knew or heard of him any where, till I met with the above mentioned history in print, in the German language, in which he ventured to relate it as a fact, that I had with those ministers, solicited him to enter into the American service. A translation of that book into French has since been printed, but the translator has omitted that pretended fact, probably from an apprehension that its being in that country known not to be true, might hurt the credit and sale of the translation.

I thank you for the sermon on Sacred Music, I have read it with pleasure. I think it a very ingenious composition. You will say this is natural enough, if you read what I have formerly written on the same subject in one of my printed letters, wherein you will find a perfect agreement of sentiment respecting the complex music; of late, in my opinion, too much in vogue; it being only pleasing to learned ears who can be delighted with the difficulty of execution instead of harmony and melody. Your affectionate brother, B. FRANKLIN.

To NOAH WEBSTER ESQ.

DEAR SIR, *Philadelphia, December* 26, 1789.

I received some time since your "*Dissertations on the English Language.*" The book was not accompanied by any letter or message, informing me to whom I am obliged for it, but I suppose it is to yourself. It is an excellent work, and will be greatly useful in turning the thoughts of our countrymen to correct writing. Please to accept my thanks for the great honour you have

done me in its dedication. I ought to have made this acknowledgment sooner, but much indisposition prevented me.

I cannot but applaud your zeal for preserving the purity of our language, both in its expressions and pronunciation, and in correcting the popular errors several of our states are continually falling into with respect to both. Give me leave to mention some of them, though possibly they may have already occurred to you. I wish however in some future publication of yours you would set a discountenancing mark upon them. The first I remember is the word *improved.* When I left New England in the year 1723, this word had never been used among us as far as I know, but in the sense of *ameliorated,* or made better, except once in a very old book of Dr. Mather's entitled "*Remarkable Providences.*" As that eminent man wrote a very obscure hand, I remember that when I read that word in his book, used instead of the word *employed,* I conjectured it was an error of the printer, who had mistaken a too short *l* in the writing for an *r,* and a *y* with too short a tail for a *v;* whereby *employed* was converted into *improved.* But when I returned to Boston in 1733 I found this change had obtained favour, and was then become common; for I met with it often in perusing the newspapers, where it frequently made an appearance rather ridiculous. Such for instance as the advertisement of a country house to be sold, which had been many years *improved* as a tavern; and in the character of a deceased country-gentleman, that he had been for more than 30 years *improved* as a justice of the peace. This use of the word *improved* is peculiar to New England, and not to be met with among any other speakers of English, either on this or the other side of the water.

During my late absence in France, I find that several other new words have been introduced into our parliamentary language; for example, I find a verb formed from the substantive *notice: I should not have* NOTICED *this were it not that the gentleman,* &c. Also another verb from the substantive *advocate, the gentleman who* ADVOCATES *or has* ADVOCATED *that motion,* &c.[1] Another from the substantive *progress,* the most awkward and abominable of the three, *the committee having* PROGRESSED *resolved to adjourn.* The word *opposed* though not a new word, I find used in a new manner, as, *the gentlemen who are* OPPOSED *to this measure;—to which I have also myself always been* OPPOSED. If you should

[1] This verb has since been adopted, and is frequently employed in the British Parliament.

happen to be of my opinion with respect to these innovations, you will use your authority in reprobating them.

The Latin Language, long the vehicle used in distributing knowledge among the different nations of Europe, is daily more and more neglected; and one of the modern tongues, viz. the French, seems in point of universality to have supplied its place; it is spoken in all the courts of Europe; and most of the literati, those even who do not speak it, have acquired knowledge enough of it to enable them easily to read the books that are written in it. This gives a considerable advantage to that nation; it enables its authors to inculcate and spread throughout other nations such sentiments and opinions on important points as are most conducive to its interests, or which may contribute to its reputation by promoting the common interests of mankind. It is perhaps owing to its being written in French, that Voltaire's Treatise on Toleration has had so sudden and so great an effect on the bigotry of Europe, as almost entirely to disarm it. The general use of the French language has likewise a very advantageous effect on the profits of the bookselling branch of commerce, it being well known that the more copies can be sold that are struck off from one composition of types, the profits increase in a much greater proportion than they do in making a great number of pieces in any other kind of manufacture. And at present there is no capital town in Europe without a French bookseller's shop corresponding with Paris. Our English bids fair to obtain the second place. The great body of excellent printed sermons in our language, and the freedom of our writings on political subjects, have induced a number of divines of different sects and nations, as well as gentlemen concerned in public affairs, to study it; so far at least as to read it. And if we were to endeavour the facilitating its progress, the study of our tongue might become much more general. Those who have employed some parts of their time in learning a new language, have frequently observed, that while their acquaintance with it was imperfect, difficulties small in themselves operated as great ones in obstructing their progress. A book, for example, ill printed, or a pronunciation in speaking, not well articulated, would render a sentence unintelligible; which from a clear print or a distinct speaker would have been immediately comprehended. If therefore we would have the benefit of seeing our language more generally known among mankind, we should endeavour to remove all the difficulties, however small, that discourage the learning it. But I am sorry to observe that of late years those difficulties, instead of being diminished, have been augmented. In examining the English books that were printed between the restoration and the accession of George the second, we may observe,

that all *substantives* were begun with a capital, in which we imitated our mother tongue the German; this was more particularly useful to those who were not well acquainted with the English; there being such a prodigious number of our words that are both *verbs* and *substantives* and spelt in the same manner, though often accented differently in the pronunciation. This method has, by the fancy of printers, of late years been laid aside, from an idea that suppressing the capitals shows the character to greater advantage; those letters prominent above the line disturbing its even regular appearance. The effect of this change is so considerable, that a learned man of France who used to read our books, though not perfectly acquainted with our language, in conversation with me on the subject of our authors attributed the greater obscurity he found in our modern books, compared with those of the period above mentioned, to change of style for the worse in our writers; of which mistake I convinced him by marking for him each *substantive* with a capital in a paragraph, which he then easily understood, though before he could not comprehend it. This shows the inconvenience of that pretended improvement. From the same fondness for an even and uniform appearance of characters in the line, the printers have of late banished also the Italic types in which words of importance to be attended to in the sense of the sentence, and words on which an emphasis should be put in reading, used to be printed. And lately another fancy has induced some printers to use the short round *s* instead of the long one, which formerly served well to distinguish a word readily by its varied appearance. Certainly the omitting this prominent letter makes the line appear more even; but renders it less immediately legible, as the paring all men's noses might smooth and level their faces, but would render their physiognomies less distinguishable. Add to all these improvements *backwards*, another modern fancy that grey printing is more beautiful than black; hence the English new books are printed in so dim a character as to be read with difficulty by old eyes, unless in a very strong light and with good glasses. Whoever compares a volume of the Gentleman's Magazine printed between the years 1731 and 1740, with one of those printed in the last ten years, will be convinced of the much greater degree of perspicuity given by black ink than by grey. Lord Chesterfield pleasantly remarked this difference to Faulkener, the printer of the Dublin Journal, who was vainly making encomiums on his own paper, as the most complete of any in the world,—"but Mr. Faulkener," said my Lord, "don't you think it might be still farther improved by using paper and ink not quite so near of a colour?" For all these reasons I cannot but wish that our American printers would in their

editions avoid these fancied improvements, and thereby render their works more agreeable to foreigners in Europe, to the great advantage of our bookselling commerce.

Further, to be more sensible of the advantage of clear and distinct printing, let us consider the assistance it affords in reading well aloud to an auditory. In so doing the eye generally slides forward three or four words before the voice. If the sight clearly distinguishes what the coming words are, it gives time to order the modulation of the voice to express them properly. But if they are obscurely printed or disguised by omitting the capitals and long s's or otherwise, the reader is apt to modulate wrong, and finding he has done so he is obliged to go back and begin the sentence again, which lessens the pleasure of the hearers. This leads me to mention an old error in our mode of printing. We are sensible that when a question is met with in reading, there is a proper variation to be used in the management of the voice. We have therefore a point called an interrogation, affixed to the question in order to distinguish it. But this is absurdly placed at its end; so that the reader does not discover it, till he finds he has wrongly modulated his voice, and is therefore obliged to begin again the sentence. To prevent this the Spanish printers, more sensibly, place an interrogation at the beginning as well as at the end of a question. We have another error of the same kind in printing plays, where something often occurs that is marked as spoken *aside*. But the word *aside* is placed at the end of the speech, when it ought to precede it, as a direction to the reader that he may govern his voice accordingly. The practice of our ladies in meeting five or six together to form a little busy party where each is employed in some useful work while one reads to them, is so commendable in itself that it deserves the attention of authors and printers to make it as pleasing as possible, both to the reader and hearers.

After these general observations permit me to make one that I imagine may regard your interest. It is that *your* spelling book is miserably printed here, so as in many places to be scarcely legible, and on wretched paper. If this is not attended to, and the new one lately advertised as coming out, should be preferable in these respects, it may hurt the future sale of yours.

I congratulate you on your marriage, of which the newspapers inform me. My best wishes attend you, being with sincere esteem, Sir, your most obedient and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

LETTER FROM DR. STILES, PRESIDENT OF YALE COLLEGE, &c. TO DR. FRANKLIN.

SIR, *Yale College, Jan.* 28. 1790.

We have lately received Governor Yale's portrait from his family in London, and deposited it in the College Library, where is also deposited one of Governor Saltonstall's. I have also long wished that we might be honoured also with that of Dr. Franklin. In the course of your long life, you may probably have become possessed of several portraits of yourself. Shall I take too great a liberty, in humbly asking a donation of one of them to Yale College? You obliged me with a mezzotinto picture of yourself many years ago, which I often view with pleasure. But the canvass is more permanent. We wish to be possessed of the durable resemblance of the American Patriot and Philosopher. You have merited and received all the honours of the republic of letters; and are going to a world, where all sublunary glories will be lost in the glories of immortality. Should you shine throughout the intellectual and stellary universe, with the eminence and distinguished lustre with which you have appeared in this little detached part of the creation, you would be what I most fervently wish to you, Sir, whatever may be my fate in eternity. The grand climacteric in which I now am, reminds me of the interesting scenes of futurity. You know, Sir, that I am a Christian, and would to heaven all others were such as I am, except my imperfections and deficiencies of moral character. As much as I know of Dr. Franklin, I have not an idea of his religious sentiments. I wish to know the opinion of my venerable friend concerning JESUS *of Nazareth.* He will not impute this to *impertinence* or improper curiosity, in one, who for so many years has continued to love, estimate, and reverence his abilities and literary character, with an ardour and affection bordering on adoration. If I have said too much let the request be blotted out, and be no more; and yet I shall never cease to wish you that happy immortality which I believe Jesus alone has purchased for the virtuous and truly good of every religious denomination in Christendom, and for those of every age, nation, and mythology, who reverence the deity, are filled with integrity, righteousness, and benevolence. Wishing you every blessing, I am, Dear Sir, your most obedient servant, EZRA STILES.

His Excellency Dr. Benjamin Franklin, Philadelphia.

ANSWER TO THE REVEREND PRESIDENT STILES.

REVEREND AND DEAR SIR, *Philadelphia, March* 9, 1790.

I received your kind letter of January 28, and am glad you

have at length received the portrait of Governor Yale from his family, and deposited it in the College library. He was a great and good man, and had the merit of doing infinite service to your country by his munificence to that institution. The honour you propose doing me, by placing mine in the same room with his, is much too great for my deserts; but you always had a partiality for me, and to that it must be ascribed. I am however too much obliged to Yale College, the first learned society that took notice of me and adorned me with its honours, to refuse a request that comes from it through so esteemed a friend. But I do not think any one of the portraits you mention as in my possession worthy of the situation and company you propose to place it in. You have an excellent artist lately arrived. If he will undertake to make one for you, I shall chearfully pay the expence: but he must not delay setting about it, or I may slip through his fingers, for I am now in my 85th year, and very infirm.

I send with this a very learned work as it seems to me, on the antient Samaritan Coins, lately printed in Spain, and at least curious for the beauty of the impression. Please to accept it for your College library. I have subscribed for the Encyclopedia now printing here, with the intention of presenting it to the College. I shall probably depart before the work is finished, but shall leave directions for its continuance to the end. With this you will receive some of the first numbers.

You desire to know something of my religion. It is the first time I have been questioned upon it. But I cannot take your curiosity amiss, and shall endeavour in a few words to gratify it. Here is my creed: I believe in one God, the creator of the universe. That he governs it by his Providence. That he ought to be worshipped. That the most acceptable service we render to him is doing good to his other children. That the soul of man is immortal, and will be treated with justice in another life respecting its conduct in this. These I take to be the fundamental points in all sound religion, and I regard them as you do in whatever sect I meet with them. As to Jesus of Nazareth, my opinion of whom you particularly desire, I think the system of morals and his religion as he left them to us, the best the world ever saw or is like to see; but I apprehend it has received various corrupting changes, and I have with most of the present dissenters in England, some doubts as to his divinity; though it is a question I do not dogmatise upon, having never studied it, and think it needless to busy myself with it now, when I expect soon an opportunity of knowing the truth with less trouble. I see no harm however in its being believed, if that belief has the good consequence, as probably it has of making his doctrines more respected and more observed,

especially as I do not perceive that the Supreme takes it amiss by distinguishing the believers in his government of the world with any peculiar marks of his displeasure. I shall only add respecting myself, that having experienced the goodness of that being in conducting me prosperously through a long life, I have no doubt of its continuance in the next, though without the smallest conceit of meriting such goodness. My sentiments on this head you will see in the copy of an old letter inclosed,[1] which I wrote in answer to one from an old religionist whom I had relieved in a paralitic case by electricity, and who being afraid I should grow proud upon it, sent me his serious though rather impertinent caution. I send you also the copy of another letter,[2] which will show something of my disposition relating to religion. With great and sincere esteem and affection, I am, &c.

P. S. Had not your College some present of books from the King of France. Please to let me know if you had an expectation given you of more, and the nature of that expectation? I have a reason for the enquiry.

I confide that you will not expose me to criticisms and censures by publishing any part of this communication to you. I have ever let others enjoy their religious sentiments without reflecting on them for those that appeared to me unsupportable or even absurd. All sects here, and we have a great variety, have experienced my good will in assisting them with subscriptions for the building their new places of worship, and as I have never opposed any of their doctrines, I hope to go out of the world in peace with them all.

To * * *.

DEAR SIR, (Without date).

I have read your manuscript with some attention. By the argument it contains against a particular Providence, though you allow a general Providence, you strike at the foundations of all religion. For without the belief of a Providence that takes cognizance of, guards and guides, and may favour particular persons, there is no motive to worship a Deity, to fear its displeasure, or to pray for its protection. I will not enter into any discussion of your principles, though you seem to desire it. At present I shall only give you my opinion, that though your reasonings are subtle, and may prevail with some readers, you will not succeed so as to change the general sentiments of mankind on that subject, and the

[1] Supposed to be the Letter to George Whitfield, dated June 6, 1753.

[2] Uncertain: perhaps the following one?

consequence of printing this piece will be, a great deal of odium drawn upon yourself, mischief to you, and no benefit to others. He that spits against the wind, spits in his own face. But were you to succeed, do you imagine any good would be done by it? You yourself may find it easy to live a virtuous life without the assistance afforded by religion; you having a clear perception of the advantages of virtue, and the disadvantages of vice, and possessing a strength of resolution sufficient to enable you to resist common temptations. But think how great a portion of mankind consists of weak and ignorant men and women, and of inexperienced inconsiderate youth of both sexes, who have need of the motives of religion to restrain them from vice, to support their virtue, and retain them in the practice of it till it becomes *habitual*, which is the great point for its security. And perhaps you are indebted to her originally, that is to your religious education, for the habits of virtue upon which you now justly value yourself. You might easily display your excellent talents of reasoning upon a less hazardous subject, and thereby obtain a rank with our most distinguished authors. For among us it is not necessary as among the Hottentots, that a youth to be raised into the company of men should prove his manhood by beating his mother. I would advise you therefore not to attempt unchaining the tiger, but to burn this piece before it is seen by any other person, whereby you will save yourself a great deal of mortification from the enemies it may raise against you, and perhaps a good deal of regret and repentance. If men are so wicked *with religion*, what would they be if *without it?* I intend this letter itself as a *proof* of my friendship, and therefore add no *professions* to it; but subscribe simply yours,

B. FRANKLIN.

SUPPLEMENT

TO

PRIVATE CORRESPONDENCE.—PART I.

(being Letters accidentally omitted).

To Henry Laurens, Esq.

Dear Sir, *Passy, March* 1784.

I write this in great pain from the gout in both feet; but my young friend your son having informed me that he sets out for London to-morrow, I could not slip the opportunity, as perhaps it is the only safe one that may occur before your departure for America. I wish mine was as near. I think I have reason to complain that I am so long without an answer from Congress to my request of recall. I wish rather to die in my own country than here; and though the upper part of the building appears yet tolerably firm, yet being undermined by the stone and gout united, its fall cannot be far distant. You are so good as to offer me your friendly services. You cannot do me one more acceptable at present than that of forwarding my dismission. In all other respects as well as that, I shall ever look on your friendship as an honour to me; being with sincere and great esteem, dear Sir, &c. &c.

P. S. March 13, 1784.

Having had a tolerable night, I find myself something better this morning. In reading over my letter I perceive an omission of my thanks for your kind assurances of never forsaking my defence should there be need. I apprehend that the violent antipathy of a certain person to me, may have produced some calumnies, which what you have seen and heard here may enable you to refute. You will thereby exceedingly oblige one, who has lived beyond all other

ambition than that of dying with the fair character he has long endeavoured to deserve. As to my infallibility, which you do not undertake to maintain, I am too modest myself to claim it, that is *in general;* though when we come *to particulars*, I, like other people, give it up with difficulty. Steele says, that the difference between the church of Rome, and the church of England on that point, is only this; that the one pretends to be *infallible*, and the other to be *never in the wrong*. In this latter sense, we are most of us church of England men, though few of us confess it and express it so naturally and frankly as a certain lady here, who said, I dont know how it happens, but I meet with nobody, except myself, that is *always* in the right. *Il n'y a que moi qui a toujours raison.*

My grandson joins me in affectionate respects to you and the young lady, with best wishes for your health and prosperity. Yours, B. FRANKLIN.

TO MR. JONATHAN WILLIAMS.

Passy, May 19, 1785.

The conversations you mention respecting America are suitable. Those people speak what they wish; but she was certainly never in a more happy situation. They are angry with us, and speak all manner of evil of us; but we flourish notwithstanding. They put me in mind of a violent high church factor, resident in Boston, when I was a boy. He had bought upon speculation a Connecticut cargo of onions, which he flattered himself he might sell again to great profit, but the price fell, and they lay upon hand. He was heartily vexed with his bargain, especially when he observed they began to *grow* in the store he had filled with them. He showed them one day to a friend. Here they are, says he, and they are *growing* too! I damn them every day; but I think they are like the Presbyterians; the more I curse them, the more they grow. Yours, B. F.

TO THE HONOURABLE DAVID HARTLEY.

Passy, July 5, 1785.

I cannot quit the coasts of Europe without taking leave of my ever dear friend Mr. Hartley. We were long fellow labourers in the best of all works, the work of peace. I leave you still in the field, but having finished my day's task, I am going home *to go to bed:* Wish me a good night's rest, as I do you a pleasant evening. Adieu! and believe me ever, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN,
in his 80th year.

To David Hartley, Esq.

Dear Sir, *Philadelphia, Oct. 27, 1785.*

I received at Havre de Grace 6 copies of your print, which I have brought with me hither. I shall frame and keep one of them in my best room. I shall send one to Mr. Jay, and give the others among some friends who esteem and respect you as we do.

Your newspapers are filled with accounts of distresses and miseries that these states are plunged into since their separation from Britain. You may believe me when I tell you that there is no truth in those accounts. I find all property in lands and houses augmented vastly in value; that of houses and towns at least four-fold. The crops have been plentiful, and yet the produce sells high, to the great profit of the farmer. At the same time all imported goods sell at low rates, some cheaper than the first cost. Working people have plenty of employ and high pay for their labour. These appear to me as certain signs of public prosperity. Some traders indeed complain that trade is dead; but this pretended evil is not an effect of inability in the people to buy, pay for, and consume the usual articles of commerce, as far as they have occasion for them, it is owing merely to there being too many traders who have crowded hither from all parts of Europe with more goods than the natural demand of the country requires. And what in Europe is called the debt of America is chiefly the debt of these adventurers and supercargoes to their principals, with which the settled inhabitants of America, who never paid better, for what they want and buy, have nothing to do. As to the contentment of the inhabitants with the change of government, methinks a stronger proof cannot be desired, than what they have given in my reception. You know the part I had in that change, and you see in the papers the addresses from all ranks with which your friend was welcomed home, and the sentiments they contain confirmed yesterday in the choice of him for President by the council and new assembly, which was unanimous, a single voice in seventy seven excepted.

I remember you used to wish for newspapers from America. Herewith I send a few, and you shall be regularly supplied, if you can put me in a way of sending them, so as that you may not be obliged to pay postage.

With unchangeable esteem and respect I am, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. Franklin.

END OF PART I.

MEMOIRS

OF

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

PRIVATE CORRESPONDENCE.

PART II.

LETTERS RELATING TO AMERICAN POLITICS.

To Joseph Galloway, Esq. Speaker of the House of Assembly of Pennsylvania.

Dear Sir, *London, June* 13, 1767.

In my last of May 20th, I mentioned my hopes that we should at length get over all obstructions to the repeal of the act restraining the legal tender of paper money; but those hopes are now greatly lessened.

The ministry had agreed to the repeal and the notion that had possessed them that they might make a revenue from paper money in appropriating the interest by parliament, was pretty well removed by my assuring them, that it was my opinion no colony would make money on those terms, and that the benefits arising to the commerce of this country in America from a plentiful currency would therefore be lost, and the repeal answer no end, if the assemblies were not allowed to appropriate the interest themselves; that the crown might get a great share upon occasional

requisitions, I made no doubt by voluntary appropriations of the assemblies; but they would never establish such funds as to make themselves unnecessary to government &c. Those and other reasons that were urged seemed to satisfy them, and we began to think all would go smoothly, and the merchants prepared their petition on which the repeal was to be founded. But in the house when the Chancellor of the Exchequer had gone through his proposed American revenue, viz. by duties on glass, china ware, paper, pasteboard, colours, tea &c. Grenville stood up and undervalued them all as trifles; and says he, "I'll tell the honourable gentleman of a revenue that will produce something valuable in America: make paper money for the colonies, issue it upon loan there, take the interest and apply it as you think proper." Mr. Townsend finding the house listened to this, and seemed to like it, stood up again, and said "that was a proposition of his own which he had intended to make with the rest, but it had slipt his memory, and the gentleman, who must have heard of it, now unfairly would take advantage of that slip and make a merit to himself of a proposition that was another's, and as a proof of it, assured the house a bill was prepared for the purpose and would be laid before them." This startled all our friends; and the merchants concluded to keep back their petition for a while, till things appeared a little clearer, lest their friends in America should blame them as having furnished foundation for an act that must have been disagreeable to the colonies. I found the rest of the ministry did not like this proceeding of the Chancellor's, but there was no going on with our scheme against his declaration, and as he daily talked of resigning, there being no good agreement between him and the rest; and as we found the general prejudice against the colonies so strong in the house, that any thing in the shape of a favour to them all was like to meet with great opposition, whether he was out or in, I proposed to Mr. Jackson, the putting our colony foremost as we stood in a pretty good light, and asking the favour for us alone. This he agreed might be proper in case the chancellor should go out, and undertook to bring in a bill for that purpose, provided the Philadelphia merchants would petition for it, and he wished to have such petition ready to present if an opening for it should offer. Accordingly I applied to them and prepared a draft of a petition for them to sign, a copy of which I send you inclosed. They seemed generally for the measure; but apprehending the merchants of the other colonies, who had hitherto gone hand in hand with us in all American affairs, might take umbrage if we now separated from them, it was thought right to call a meeting of the whole to consult upon this proposal. At this meeting I represented to them as the ground of this measure, that the colonies being generally

out of favour at present, any hard clause relating to paper money in the repealing bill will be more easily received in parliament if the bill related to all the colonies: that Pennsylvania being in some degree of favour might possibly alone obtain a better act than the whole could do, as it might by government be thought as good policy to show favour where there had been obedience, as resentment where there had been the reverse. That a good act obtained by Pennsylvania might another year, when the resentment against the colonies should be abated, be made use of as a precedent &c. &c. But after a good deal of debate it was finally concluded not to precipitate matters, it being very dangerous by any kind of petition to furnish the chancellor with a horse on which he could put what saddle he thought fit: the other merchants seemed rather averse to the Pennsylvania merchants proceeding alone, but said they were certainly at liberty to do as they thought proper. The conclusion of the Pennsylvania merchants was to wait awhile holding the separate petition ready to sign and present if a proper opening should appear this session, but otherwise to reserve it to the next, when the complexion of ministers and measures may probably be changed. And as this session now draws to a conclusion, I begin to think nothing will be farther done in it this year.

Mentioning the merchants, puts me in mind of some discourse I heard among them, that was by no means agreeable. It was said that in the opposition they gave the Stamp act and their endeavours to obtain the repeal, they had spent at their meetings, and in expresses to all parts of this country, and for a vessel to carry the joyful news to North America, and in the entertainments given our friends of both houses &c. near 1500*l*; that for all this except from the little colony of Rhode island they had not received so much as a *thank ye*. That on the contrary the circular letters they had written with the best intentions to the merchants of the several colonies, containing their best and most friendly advice, were either answered with unkind reflections, or contemptuously left without answer. And that the captain of the vessel they sent express with the news, having met with misfortunes, that obliged him to travel by land through all the colonies from New Hampshire to Pennsylvania, was every where treated with neglect and contempt, instead of civility and hospitality; and no where with more than at Philadelphia, where, though he delivered letters to the merchants that must make him and his errand known to them, no one took the least notice of him. I own I was ashamed to hear all this, but hope there is some mistake in it. I should not have troubled you with this account, but that I think we stand in truth greatly obliged to the merchants who are a very respectable body, and whose friendship is worth preserv-

ing, as it may greatly help us on future occasions; and therefore I wish some decent acknowledgments or thanks were sent from the assemblies of the colonies, since their correspondents have omitted it.

I have said the less of late in my letters concerning the petitions, because I hoped this summer to have an opportunity of communicating every thing *viva voce*, and there are particulars that cannot safely be trusted to paper. Perhaps I may be more determined, as to returning or staying another winter, when I receive my next letters from you and my other friends in Philadelphia.

We got the chancellor to drop his Salt duty. And the merchants trading to Portugal and Spain, he says, have made such a clamour about the intention of suffering ships to go directly with wine, fruit, and oil from those countries to America that he has dropped that scheme, and we are it seems to labour a little longer under the inconveniences of the restraint.

It is said the bill to suspend the legislatures of New York and Georgia till they comply with the act of parliament for quartering soldiers will pass this session. I fear that imprudencies on both sides may step by step bring on the most mischievous consequences. It is imagined here that this act will enforce immediate compliance; and if the people should be quiet, content themselves with the laws they have, and let the matter rest, till in some future war the king wanting aids from them, and finding himself restrained in his legislation by the act as much as the people, shall think fit by his ministers to propose the repeal, the parliament will be greatly disappointed; and perhaps it may take this turn. I wish nothing worse may happen.

The present ministry will probably continue through this session. But their disagreement, with the total inability of Lord Chatham through sickness to do any business must bring on some change before next winter. I wish it may be for the better, but fear the contrary.

Please to present my dutiful respects to the assembly, and believe me ever, dear sir, yours and the committee's most obedient and faithful humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

To JOSEPH GALLOWAY, ESQ.

DEAR SIR, *London, August* 8, 1767.

I have before me your favours of April 23, May 21 and 26. The confusion among our great men still continues as much as ever, and a melancholy thing it is to consider, that instead of employing the present leisure of

peace in such measures as might extend our commerce, pay off our debts, secure allies and increase the strength and ability of the nation to support a future war, the whole seems to be wasted in party contentions, about places of power and profit, in court intrigues and cabals, and in abusing one another.

There has lately been an attempt to make a kind of coalition of parties in a new ministry, but it fell through, and the present set is like to continue for some time longer, which I am rather pleased with, as some of those who were proposed to be introduced are professed adversaries to America, which is now made one of the distinctions of party here, those who have in the two last sessions shown a disposition to favour us, being called by way of reproach Americans, while the others adherents to Grenville and Bedford value themselves on being true to the interests of Britain, and zealous for maintaining its dignity and sovereignty over the colonies. This distinction will, it is apprehended, be carried much higher in the next session, for the political purpose of influencing the ensuing election. It is already given out that the compliance of New York in providing for the quarters, without taking notice of its being done in obedience to the act of parliament, is evasive and unsatisfactory. That it is high time to put the right and power of this country to tax the colonies out of dispute, by an Act of Taxation effectually carried into execution, and that all the colonies should be obliged explicitly to acknowledge that right. Every step is taking to render the taxing America a popular measure here, by continually insisting on the topics of our wealth and flourishing circumstances, while this country is loaded with debt, great part of it incurred on our account, the distress of the poor here by the multitude and weight of taxes, &c. &c. and though the traders and manufacturers may possibly be kept in our interest, the idea of an American tax is very pleasing to the landed men, who therefore readily receive and propagate these sentiments wherever they have influence. If such a bill should be brought in, it is hard to say what would be the event of it, or what would be the effects. Those who oppose it, though they should be strong enough to throw it out, would be stigmatized as Americans, betrayers of Old England, &c. and perhaps our friends by this means being excluded, a majority of our adversaries may get in, and then the act infallibly passes the following session. To avoid the danger of such exclusion perhaps little opposition will be given, and then it passes immediately. I know not what to advise on this occasion, but that we should all do our endeavours on both sides the water to lessen the present unpopularity of the American cause, conciliate the affections of people here towards us, increase by all possible means the number of our friends, and be careful not to weaken their hands and strengthen

those of our enemies, by rash proceedings on our side, the mischiefs of which are inconceivable. Some of our friends have thought that a publication of my examination here, might answer some of the above purposes, by removing prejudices and refuting falsehoods, and demonstrating our merits with regard to this country. It is accordingly printed and has a great run. I have another piece in hand which I intend to put out about the time of the meeting of parliament, if those I consult with shall judge that it may be of service.

The next session of parliament will probably be a short one, on account of the following election. And I am now advised by some of our great friends here to see that out, not returning to America till the spring. My presence indeed is necessary there to settle some private affairs. Unforeseen and unavoidable difficulties have hitherto obstructed our proceedings in the main intent of my coming over, and perhaps (though I think my being here has not been altogether unserviceable) our friends in the Assembly may begin to be discouraged and tired of the expence. If that should be the case I would not have you propose to continue me as agent at the meeting of the new Assembly; my endeavours to serve the province in what I may while I remain here, shall not be lessened by that omission.

I am glad you have made a trial of paper money *not a* legal tender. The quantity being small may perhaps be kept up in full credit notwithstanding; and if that can be avoided, I am not for applying here again very soon for a repeal of the restraining Act. I am afraid an ill use will be made of it. The plan of our adversaries is to render Assemblies in America useless; and to have a revenue independant of their grants, for all the purposes of their defence, and supporting governments among them. It is our interest to prevent this. And that they may not lay hold of our necessities for paper money, to draw a revenue from that article, whenever they grant us the liberty we want of making it a legal tender, I wish some other method may be fallen upon of supporting its credit. What think you of getting all the merchants, traders, and principal people of all sorts to join in petitions to the Assembly for a moderate emission, the petition being accompanied with a mutual engagement to take it in all dealings at the rates fixed by law? Such an engagement had a great effect in fixing the value and rates of our gold and silver. Or, perhaps, a bank might be established that would answer all purposes. Indeed I think with you that those merchants here who have made difficulties on the subject of the legal tender have not "understood their own interests. For there can be no doubt, that should a scarcity of money continue among us, we shall take off less of their merchandize and attend more to manufacturing and raising the necessaries and

superfluities of life among ourselves which we now receive from them." And perhaps this consequence would attend our making no paper money at all of any sort, that being thus by a want of cash driven to industry and frugality, we should gradually become more rich without their trade, than we can possibly be with it, and by keeping in the country the real cash that comes into it, have in time a quantity sufficient for all our occasions. But I suppose our people will scarce have patience to wait for this.

I have received the printed votes, but not the laws. I hear nothing yet of any objection made by the proprietaries to any of them at the Board of Trade.

Please to present my duty to the Assembly, with thanks for their care of me, and assure them of my most faithful services. With sincerest esteem and respect, I am, my dear friend, yours most affectionately, B. FRANKLIN.

To GOVERNOR FRANKLIN, NEW JERSEY.

DEAR SON, *London, August* 28, 1767.

I have no letter of yours since my last, in which I answered all preceding ones.

Last week I dined at Lord Shelburne's, and had a long conversation with him and Mr. Conway (there being no other company), on the subject of reducing American expence. They have it in contemplation to return the management of Indian affairs into the hands of the several provinces on which the nations border, that the colonies may bear the charge of treaties, &c. which they think will then be managed more frugally, the treasury being tired with the immense drafts of the superintendants, &c. I took the opportunity of urging it as one means of saving expence in supporting the out-posts, that a settlement should be made in the Illinois country; expatiated on the various advantages, viz. furnishing provisions cheaper to the garrisons, securing the country, retaining the trade, raising a strength there which on occasion of a future war, might easily be poured down the Missisippi upon the lower country, and into the Bay of Mexico, to be used against Cuba, or Mexico itself, &c. I mentioned your plan, its being approved by Sir William Johnson, the readiness and ability of the gentlemen concerned to carry the settlement into execution with very little expence to the crown, &c. &c. The Secretaries appeared finally to be fully convinced, and there remained no obstacle but the Board of Trade, which was to be brought over privately before the matter should be referred to them officially. In case of laying aside the Superintendants, a provision was thought of for Sir William Johnson, &c. We had a good deal of

farther discourse on American affairs, particularly on paper money: Lord Shelburne declared himself fully convinced of the utility of taking off the restraint, by my answer to the report of the Board of Trade. General Conway had not seen it, and desired me to send it to him, which I did next morning. They gave me expectation of a repeal next session, Lord Clare being come over: but they said there was some difficulty with others at the board who had signed that report: for there was a good deal in what Soame Jenyns had laughingly said when asked to concur in some measure, *I have no kind of objection to it, provided we have heretofore signed nothing to the contrary.* In this conversation I did not forget our main Pennsylvania business, and I think made some farther progress, though but little. The two Secretaries seemed intent upon preparing business for next parliament, which makes me think, that the late projects of changes are now quite over, and that they expect to continue in place. But whether they will do much or little, I cannot say.

Du Guerchy the French Ambassador is gone home, and Monsieur Durand is left Minister Plenipotentiary. He is extremely curious to inform himself in the affairs of America; pretends to have a great esteem for me, on account of the abilities shown in my examination; has desired to have all my political writings, invited me to dine with him, was very inquisitive, treated me with great civility, makes me visits, &c. I fancy that intriguing nation would like very well to meddle on occasion, and blow up the coals between Britain and her colonies; but I hope we shall give them no opportunity.

I write this in a great hurry, being setting out in an hour on another journey with my steady good friend Sir John Pringle. We propose to visit Paris. Durand has given me letters of recommendation to the Lord knows who. I am told I shall meet with great respect there; but winds change and perhaps it will be full as well if I do not. We shall be gone about six weeks. I have a little private commission to transact of which more another time. Communicate nothing of this letter but privately to our friend Galloway. I am your affectionate father, B. FRANKLIN.

To GOVERNOR FRANKLIN.

DEAR SON, *London, Nov. 25, 1767.*

I think the New Yorkers have been very discreet in forbearing to write and publish against the late Act of Parliament. I wish the Boston people had been as quiet, since Governor Bernard has sent over all their violent papers to the ministry, and wrote them word that he daily expected a rebellion. He did indeed afterwards correct this extravagance by writing again that he now understood

those papers were approved but by few, and disliked by all the sober sensible people of the province. A certain noble Lord expressed himself to me with some disgust and contempt of B. on this occasion; saying he ought to have known his people better, than to impute to the whole country sentiments that perhaps are only scribbled by some madman in a garret; that he appeared to be too fond of contention and mistook the matter greatly in supposing such letters as he wrote were acceptable to the ministry. I have heard nothing of the appointment of General Clark to New York: but I know he is a friend of Lord Shelburne's, and the same that recommended Mr. Mc. Lean to be his secretary. Perhaps it might be talked of in my absence.

The Commissioners for the American Board went hence while I was in France; you know before this time who they are and how they are received, which I want to hear. Mr. Williams, who is gone in some office with them, is brother to our cousin Williams of Boston; but I assure you I had not the least share in his appointment; having, as I told you before, carefully kept out of the way of that whole affair.

As soon as I received Mr. Galloway's, Mr. T. Wharton's, and Mr. Croghan's letters on the subject of the Boundary, I communicated them immediately to Lord Shelburne. He invited me the next day to dine with him. Lord Clare was to have been there but did not come. There was nobody but Mr. Mc. Lean. My Lord knew nothing of the boundary's having ever been agreed on by Sir William, had sent the letters to the Board of Trade, desiring search to be made there for Sir William's letters, and ordered Mr. Mc. Lean to search the Secretary's office, who found nothing. We had much discourse about it and I pressed the importance of dispatching orders immediately to Sir William to complete the affair. His Lordship asked who was to make the purchase, i. e. be at the expence? I said that if the line included any lands within the grants of the Charter Colonies, they should pay the purchase money of such proportion. If any within the proprietary grants they should pay their proportion, but that what was within Royal Governments where the King granted the Lands, the Crown should pay for that proportion. His Lordship was pleased to say, he thought this reasonable. He finally desired me to go to Lord Clare as from him, and urge the business there, which I undertook to do. Among other things at this conversation we talked of the new settlement; his Lordship told me he had himself drawn up a paper of reasons for those settlements which he laid before the King in Council, acquainting them that he did not offer them merely as his own sentiments, they were what he had collected from General

Amherst, Dr. Franklin, and Mr. Jackson, three gentlemen that were allowed to be the best authorities for any thing that related to America. I think he added that the council seemed to approve of the design: I know it was referred to the Board of Trade, who I believe have not yet reported on it, and I doubt will report against it. My Lord told me one pleasant circumstance, viz. that he had shewn his paper to the Dean of Gloucester (Tucker), to hear his opinion of the matter; who very sagaciously remarked that he was sure that paper was drawn up by Dr. Franklin, he saw him in every paragraph; adding that Dr. Franklin wanted to remove the seat of government to America; that, says he, is his constant plan.

I waited next morning upon Lord Clare, and pressed the matter of the Boundary closely upon him. He said they could not find they had ever received any letters from Sir William concerning this Boundary, but were searching farther: agreed to the necessity of settling it; but thought there would be some difficulty about who should pay the purchase money; for that this country was already so loaded it could bear no more. We then talked of the new colonies. I found he was inclined to think one near the mouth of the Ohio might be of use, in securing the country, but did not much approve that at Detroit. And as to the trade he imagined it would be of little consequence if we had all the peltry to be purchased there, but supposed our traders would sell it chiefly to the French and Spaniards, at New Orleans, as he heard they had hitherto done.

At the same time that we Americans wish not to be judged of, in the gross by particular papers written by anonymous scribblers and published in the colonies, it would be well if we could avoid falling into the same mistake in America in judging of ministers here by the libels printed against them. The inclosed is a very abusive one, in which if there is any foundation of truth, it can only be in the insinuation contained in the words "*after eleven adjournments*" that they are too apt to postpone business: but if they have given any occasion for this reflection there are reasons and circumstances that may be urged in their excuse.

It gives me pleasure to hear that the people of the other colonies are not insensible of the zeal with which I occasionally espouse their respective interests as well as the interests of the whole. I shall continue to do so as long as I reside here and am able.

The present ministry seem now likely to continue through this session of parliament; and perhaps if the new parliament should not differ greatly in complexion from this, they may be fixed for a number of years which I earnestly wish as we have no chance for a better.

T

To JOSEPH GALLOWAY, ESQ.

DEAR SIR, *London, Dec.* 1, 1767.

I duly received your favours of August 22, September 20, and October 8, and within these few days one of February 14, recommending Mr. Morgan Edwards and his affair of the Rhode Island College, which I shall endeavour to promote, deeming the Institution one of the most catholic and generous of the kind.

I am inclined to think with you that the small sum you have issued to discharge the public debts only will not be materially affected in its credit for want of the legal tender, considering especially the present extreme want of money in the province. You appear to me to point out the true cause of the general distress, viz. the late luxurious mode of living introduced by a too great plenty of cash. It is indeed amazing to consider that we had a quantity sufficient before the war began, and that the war added immensely to that quantity by the sums spent among us by the crown, and the paper struck and issued in the province; and now in so few years all the money spent by the crown is gone away, and has carried with it all the gold and silver we had before, leaving us bare and empty, and at the same time more in debt to England than ever we were! But I am inclined to think that the mere making more money will not mend our circumstances, if we do not return to that industry and frugality which were the fundamental causes of our former prosperity. I shall nevertheless do my utmost this winter to obtain the repeal of the Act restraining the legal tender, if our friends the merchants think it practicable, and will heartily espouse the cause; and in truth they have full as much interest in the event as we have.

The present ministry it is now thought are likely to continue at least till a new parliament, so that our apprehensions of a change, and that Mr. Grenville would come in again seem over for the present. He behaves as if a little out of his head on the article of America, which he brings into every debate without rhime or reason, when the matter has not the least connection with it: thus at the beginning of this session on the debate upon the King's speech he tired every body, even his friends, with a long harangue about and against America, of which there was not a word in the speech. Last Friday he produced in the House a late Boston Gazette, which he said denied the legislative authority of parliament, was treasonable, rebellious, &c. and moved it might be read, and that the House would take cognizance of it, but it being moved on the other hand that Mr. G.'s motion should be postponed to that day six months, it was carried without a division: and as it is known that this

parliament will expire before that time it was equivalent to a total rejection of the motion. The Duke of B. too it seems moved in vain for a consideration of this paper in the house of Lords. These are favourable symptoms of the present disposition of Parliament towards America which I hope no conduct of the Americans will give just cause of altering.

Be so good as to present my best respects to the house and believe me with sincere esteem and regard, Dear Sir, your affectionate friend and most obedient servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

To MR. ROSS,—PHILADELPHIA.

DEAR SIR, *London, Dec.* 12, 1767.

I received your kind letter of October 18. I had before seen with great pleasure your name in the papers as chosen for the city of Philadelphia.

The instruction you mention as proposed by a certain great man was really a wild one. The reasons you made use of against it were clear and strong, and could not but prevail. It will be time enough to show a dislike to the coalition when it is proposed to us. Meanwhile we have all the advantage in the agreement of taxation which our not being represented will continue to give us. I think indeed that such an event is very remote. This nation is indeed too proud to propose admitting American representatives into their parliament; and America is not so humble or so fond of the honour as to petition for it. In matrimonial matches 'tis said when one party is willing the match is half made, but where neither party is willing there is no great danger of their coming together. And to be sure such an important business would never be treated of by agents unimpowered and uninstructed; nor would government here act upon the private opinion of agents which might be disowned by their constituents.

The present ministry seem now likely to continue through this session; and this as a new election approaches, gives them the advantage of getting so many of their friends chosen as may give a stability to their administration. I heartily wish it, because they are all well disposed towards America.

With sincere esteem, I am, dear sir, your affectionate friend and most obedient servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

To Governor Franklin.

Dear Son, *London, Dec.* 19, 1767.

The resolutions of the Boston people concerning trade, make a great noise here. Parliament has not yet taken notice of them, but the newspapers are in full cry against America. Colonel Onslow told me at court last Sunday, that I could not conceive how much the friends of America were run upon and hurt by them, and how much the Grenvillians triumphed. I have just written a paper for next Tuesday's Chronicle to extenuate matters a little.

Mentioning Colonel Onslow, reminds me of something that passed at the beginning of this session in the house between him and Mr. Grenville. The latter had been raving against America, as traitorous, rebellious &c. when the former, who has always been its firm friend, stood up and gravely said, that in reading the Roman history he found it was a custom among that wise and magnanimous people, whenever the senate was informed of any discontent in the provinces, to send two or three of their body into the discontented provinces to enquire into the grievances complained of and report to the senate that mild measures might be used to remedy what was amiss, before any severe steps were taken to enforce obedience. That this example he thought worthy our imitation in the present state of our colonies, for he did so far agree with the honourable gentleman that spoke just before him, as to allow there were great discontents among them. He should therefore beg leave to move that two or three members of parliament be appointed to go over to New England on this service. And that it might not be supposed he was for imposing burthens on others what he would not be willing to bear himself, he did at the same time declare his own willingness if the house should think fit to appoint them, to go over thither *with that honourable gentleman.* Upon this there was a great laugh which continued sometime, and was rather increased by Mr. Grenville's asking, "will the gentleman engage that I shall be safe there? Can I be assured that I shall be allowed to come back again to make the report?" As soon as the laugh was so far subsided as that Mr. Onslow could be heard again, he added, "I cannot absolutely engage for the honourable gentleman's safe return, but if he goes thither upon this service I am strongly of opinion the *event* will contribute greatly to the future quiet of both countries." On which the laugh was renewed and redoubled.

If our people should follow the Boston example in entering into resolutions of frugality and industry full as necessary for us as for them, I hope they will among other things give this reason, that 'tis to enable them more speedily and effectually

to discharge their debts to Great Britain; this will soften a little and at the same time appear honourable and like ourselves. Yours &c. B. FRANKLIN.

LETTER FROM GOVERNOR POWNALL TO DR. FRANKLIN,
(Concerning an equal communication of rights, privileges &c. to America by Great Britain.)[1]

DEAR SIR,

The following *objection* against communicating to the colonies the rights, privileges, and powers of the realm, as to parts of the realm, has been made. I have been endeavouring to obviate it, and I communicate [it] to you, in hopes of your promised assistance.

If, *say the objectors*, we communicate to the colonies the power of sending representatives, and in consequence expect them to participate in an *equal share and proportion* of all our taxes; we must grant to them all the powers of trade and manufacturing, which any other parts of the realm within the isle of Great Britain enjoy:—If so, perchance the profits of the Atlantic commerce may converge to some centre in America; to Boston, New York, Philadelphia, or to some of the isles:—If so, then the natural and artificial produce of the colonies, and in course of consequences the landed interest of the colonies, will be promoted; While the natural and artificial produce and landed interest of Great Britain will be depressed to its utter ruin and destruction;—and consequently the balance of the power of government, although still *within the realm*, will be *locally* transferred from Great Britain to the colonies. Which consequence, however it may suit a citizen of the world, must be folly and madness to *a Briton*.—My fit is gone off; and though weak, both from the gout and a concomitant and very ugly fever, I am much better. Would be glad to see you. Your friend, J. POWNALL.

On the back of the foregoing letter of Governor Pownall, are the following minutes, by Dr. Franklin.

This *objection* goes upon the supposition, that whatever the colonies gain, Britain must lose; and that if the *colonies* can be kept from gaining an advantage, *Britain will gain it*:—

If the colonies are fitter for a particular trade than Britain, they should have it, and Britain apply to what it is more fit for. The whole empire is a gainer. And if Britain is not so fit or so well situated for a particular advantage, *other* countries

will get it, *if the colonies do not.* Thus Ireland was forbid the woollen manufacture and remains poor: but this has given to the French the trade and wealth Ireland might have gained for the British empire.

The government cannot *long* be retained without the union. Which is best (supposing your case) to have a total separation, or a change of the seat of government?—It by no means follows, that promoting and advancing the landed interest in America will depress that of Britain: the contrary has always been the fact. Advantageous situations and circumstances will always secure and fix manufactures: Sheffield against all Europe these 300 years past.—

To Governor Franklin.

Dear Son, *London, Jan.* 9, 1768.

We have had so many alarms of changes which did not take place, that just when I wrote it was thought the ministry would stand their ground. However immediately after the talk was renewed, and it soon appeared the Sunday changes were actually settled. Mr. Conway resigns and Lord Weymouth takes his place. Lord Gower is made president of the council in the room of Lord Northington. Lord Shelburne is stript of the America business which is given to Lord Hillsborough as Secretary of State for America, a new distinct department. Lord Sandwich 'tis said comes into the Post Office in his place. Several of the Bedford party are now to come in. How these changes may affect us a little time will show. Little at present is thought of but elections which gives me hopes that nothing will be done against America this session, though the Boston gazette had occasioned some heats and the Boston resolutions a prodigious clamour. I have endeavoured to palliate matters for them as well as I can: I send you my manuscript of one paper, though I think you take the Chronicle. The editor of that paper one Jones seems a Grenvillian, or is very cautious as you will see, by his corrections and omissions. He has drawn the teeth and pared the nails of my paper, so that it can neither scratch nor bite. It seems only to paw and mumble. I send you also two other late pieces of mine. There is another which I cannot find.

I am told there has been a talk of getting me appointed under secretary to Lord Hillsborough; but with little likelihood as it is a settled point here that I am too much of an American.

I am in very good health, thanks to God: your affectionate father, B. F.

To Joseph Galloway, Esq.

Dear Sir, *London, Jan.* 9, 1768.

I wrote to you viâ Boston and have little to add except to acquaint you that some changes have taken place since my last, which have not the most promising aspect for America, several of the Bedford party being come into employment again; a party that has distinguished itself by exclaiming against us on all late occasions. Mr. Conway one of our friends, has resigned and Lord Weymouth takes his place. Lord Shelburne another friend, is stripped of the American part of the business of his office which now makes a distinct department, in which Lord Hillsborough is placed. I do not think this nobleman in general an enemy to America; but in the affair of paper money he was last winter strongly against us. I did hope I had removed some of his prejudices on that head, but am not certain. We have however increased the cry for it here, and believe shall attempt to obtain the repeal of the act, though the Boston gazette and their resolutions about manufactures have hurt us much, having occasioned an immense clamour here. I have endeavoured to palliate matters for them as well as I can, and hope with some success. For having in a large company in which were some members of parliament, given satisfaction to all by what I alleged in explanation of the conduct of the Americans, and to show that they were not quite so unreasonable as they appeared to be, I was advised by several present to make my sentiments public, not only for the sake of America, but as it would be some ease to our friends here, who are triumphed over a good deal by our adversaries on the occasion. I have accordingly done it in the enclosed paper. I shall write you fully on other subjects very soon, at present can only add my respects to the committee, and that I am, dear sir, your faithful humble servant, B. Franklin.

To Joseph Galloway, Esq.

Dear Sir, *London, Feb.* 17, 1768.

In mine of January 9, I wrote to you that I believed, notwithstanding the clamour against America had been greatly increased by the Boston proceedings, we should attempt this session to obtain the repeal of the restraining act relating to paper money. The change of administration with regard to American affairs, which was agreed on some time before the new secretary kissed hands and entered upon business, made it impossible to go forward with that affair, as the minister quitting that department would not, and his successor could not engage in it; but now our friends the merchants have been moving in it, and some of them

have conceived hopes from the manner in which Lord Hillsborough attended to their representations. It had been previously concluded among us, that if the repeal was to be obtained at all, it must be proposed in the light of a favour to the merchants of this country, and asked for by them, not by the agents as a favour to America. But as my Lord had at sundry times before he came into his present station, discoursed with me on the subject, and got from me a copy of my answer to his report when at the head of the Board of Trade, which some time since he thanked me for, and said he would read again and consider carefully, I waited upon him this morning, partly with intent to learn if he had changed his sentiments. We entered into the subject and had a long conversation upon it, in which all the arguments he used against the legal tender of paper money were intended to demonstrate that it was for the benefit of the people themselves to have no such money current among them; and it was strongly his opinion that after the experience of being without it a few years we should all be convinced of this truth, as he said, the New England colonies now were, they having lately on the rumour of an intended application for taking off the restraint, petitioned here that it might be continued as to them. However, his Lordship was pleased to say, that if such application was made for the three colonies of Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and New York, as I proposed, it should have fair play, he would himself give it no sort of opposition, but he was sure it would meet with a great deal, and he thought it could not succeed. He was pleased to make me compliments upon my paper, assuring me he had read it with a great deal of attention, that I had said much more in favour of such a currency than he thought could be said, and all he believed that the subject would admit of; but that it had not on the whole changed his opinion, any further than to induce him to leave the matter now to the judgment of others, and let it take its course, without opposing it as last year he had determined to have done. I go into the city to-morrow to confer with the merchants again upon it; that if they see any hopes, we may at least try the event: but I own my expectations are now very slender, knowing as I do, that nothing is to be done in parliament that is not a measure adopted by ministry and supported by their strength, much less any thing they are averse to *or indifferent about.*

I took the opportunity of discoursing with his Lordship concerning our particular affair of the change of government, gave him a detail of all proceedings hitherto, the delays it had met with, and its present situation. He was pleased to say he would enquire into the matter, and would talk with me farther upon it. He

expressed great satisfaction in the good disposition that he said appeared now to be general in America with regard to government here according to the latest advices: and informed me that he had by his Majesty's order wrote the most healing letters to the several governors, which if shown to the assemblies as he supposed they would be, could not but confirm that good disposition. As to the permission we want to bring wine fruit and oil directly from Spain and Portugal, and to carry iron direct to foreign markets, 'tis agreed on all hands that this is an unfavourable time to move in those matters, G. Grenville and those in the opposition on every hint of the kind making a great noise about the act of Navigation, that palladium of England as they call it, to be given up to rebellious America &c. &c. so that the ministry would not venture to propose it if *they* approved. I am to wait on the secretary again next Wednesday, and shall write you farther what passes, that is material.

The parliament have of late been acting an egregious farce, calling before them the Mayor and Aldermen of Oxford, for proposing a sum to be paid by their old members on being rechosen at the next election; and sundry printers and brokers for advertising and dealing in Boroughs &c. The Oxford people were sent to Newgate, and discharged after some days in humble petition, and receiving the speaker's reprimand upon their knees. The house could scarcely keep countenances, knowing as they all do, that the practice is general. People say, they mean nothing more than to beat down the price by a little discouragement of borough jobbing, now that their own elections are all coming on. The price indeed is grown exorbitant, no less than 4000*l.* for a member. Mr. Beckford has brought in a bill for preventing bribery and corruption in elections, wherein was a clause to oblige every member to swear on their admission into the house, that he had not directly or indirectly given any bribe to any elector &c. but this was so universally exclaimed against as answering no end but perjuring the members that he has been obliged to withdraw that clause. It was indeed a cruel contrivance of his, worse than the gunpowder plot; for that was only to blow the parliament up to heaven, this to sink them all down to ——. Mr. Thurlow opposed his bill by a long speech. Beckford in reply gave a dry hit to the house, that is repeated every where, "the honourable gentleman, says he, in his learned discourse gave us first one definition of corruption, then he gave us another definition of corruption, and I think he was about to give us a third. Pray does that gentleman imagine *there is any member of this house that does not* KNOW what corruption is?" which

occasioned only a roar of laughter, for they are so hardened in the practice that they are very little ashamed of it. This between ourselves. I am with sincerest esteem, dear sir, your most obedient humble servant, B. FRANKLIN.

To T. WHARTON, ESQ. PHILADELPHIA.

DEAR FRIEND, *London, Feb.* 20, 1768.

I received your favours of November 17, and 18, with another dozen of excellent wine the manufacture of our friend Lievezy. I thank you for the care you have taken in forwarding them, and for your kind good wishes that accompany them.

The story you mention of Secretary Conway's wondering what I could be doing in England, and that he had not seen me for a considerable time, savours strongly of the channel through which it came and deserves no notice. But since his name is mentioned it gives me occasion to relate what passed between us the last time I had the honour of conversing with him. It was at court when the late changes were first rumoured, and it was reported he was to resign the secretary's office. Talking of America, I said I was sorry to find that our friends were one after another quitting the administration, that I was apprehensive of the consequences, and hoped what I heard of his going out was not true. He said it was really true, the employment had not been of his choice, he had never any taste for it, but had submitted to engage in it for a time at the instance of his friends, and he believed his removal could not be attended with any ill consequences to America. That he was a sincere well wisher to the prosperity of that country as well as this, and hoped the imprudencies of either side would never be carried to such a height as to create a breach of the union, so essentially necessary to the welfare of both. That as long as his Majesty continued to honour him with a share in his councils, America should always find in him a friend &c. This I write as it was agreeable to me to hear and I suppose will be so to you to read. For his character has more in it of the frank honesty of the soldier, than of the plausible insincerity of the courtier; and therefore what he says is more to be depended on. The proprietor's dislike to my continuing in England to be sure is very natural; as well as to the repeated choice of assembly men not his friends; and probably he would as they so little answer his purposes wish to see elections as well as agencies abolished. They make him very unhappy, but it cannot be helped.

The proceedings in Boston, as the news came just upon the meeting of parliament and occasioned great clamour here, gave me much concern. And as every

offensive thing done in America is charged upon all, and every province though unconcerned in it, suffers in its interests through the general disgust given and the little distinction here made, it became necessary I thought to palliate the matter a little for our own sakes, and therefore I wrote the paper which probably you have seen printed in the Chronicle of January 7, and signed F+S. Yours affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

To GOVERNOR FRANKLIN.

DEAR SON, *London, March* 13, 1768.

I have received all together your letters of January 6, 21, and 22: it had been a great while that I had not heard from you.

The purpose of settling the new colonies seems at present to be dropped, the change of American administration not appearing favourable to it. There seems rather to be an inclination to abandon the posts in the back country as more expensive than useful; but counsels are so continually fluctuating here, that nothing can be depended on. The new secretary, my Lord Hillsborough is I find of opinion that the troops should be placed, the chief part of them, in Canada and Florida, only three battalions to be quartered in New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania; and that forts Pitt, Oswego, Niagara, &c. should be left to the colonies to garrison and keep up if they think it necessary for the protection of their trade, &c. Probably his opinion may be followed if new changes do not produce other ideas. As to my own sentiments, I am weary of suggesting them to so many different inattentive heads, though I must continue to do it while I stay among them. The letters from Sir William Johnson relating to the boundary were at last found, and orders were sent over about Christmas for completing the purchase and settlement of it. My Lord H. has promised me to send duplicates by this packet, and urge the speedy execution, as we represented to him the danger that these dissatisfactions of the Indians might produce a war. But I can tell you there are many here to whom the news of such a war would give pleasure; who speak of it as a thing to be wished; partly as a chastisement to the colonies, and partly to make them feel the want of protection from this country, and pray for it. For it is imagined that we could not possibly defend ourselves against the Indians without such assistance, so little is the state of America understood here.

My Lord H. mentioned the Farmer's letters to me, said he had read them, that they were well written, and he believed he could guess who was the author, looking in my face at the same time as if he thought it was me. He censured the doctrines

as extremely wild, &c. I have read them as far as No. 8. I know not if any more have been published. I should have thought they had been written by Mr. Delancey, not having heard any mention of the others you point out as joint authors. I am not yet master of the idea these and the New England writers have of the relation between Britain and her colonies. I know not what the Boston people mean by the "subordination" they acknowledge in their Assembly to Parliament, while they deny its power to make laws for them, nor what bounds the Farmer sets to the power he acknowledges in Parliament to "regulate the trade of the colonies," it being difficult to draw lines between duties for regulation and those for revenue, and if the Parliament is to be the judge, it seems to me that establishing such principles of distinction will amount to little. The more I have thought and read on the subject the more I find myself confirmed in opinion, that no middle doctrine can be well maintained, I mean not clearly with intelligible arguments. Something might be made of either of the extremes; that Parliament has a power to make *all laws* for us, or that it has a power to make *no laws* for us; and I think the arguments for the latter more numerous and weighty than those for the former. Supposing that doctrine established, the colonies would then be so many separate states, only subject to the same King, as England and Scotland were before the Union. And then the question would be, whether a union like that with Scotland would or would not be advantageous to *the whole*. I should have no doubt of the affirmative, being fully persuaded that it would be best for *the whole*, and that though particular parts might find particular disadvantages in it, they would find greater advantages in the security arising to every part from the increased strength of the whole. But such union is not likely to take place while the nature of our present relation is so little understood on both sides the water, and sentiments concerning it remain so widely different. As to the Farmers' combating, as you say they intend to do, my opinion that the Parliament might lay duties though not impose internal taxes, I shall not give myself the trouble to defend it. Only to you, I may say, that no tonly the Parliament of Britain, but every state in Europe claims and exercises a right of laying duties on the exportation of its own commodities to foreign countries. A duty is paid here on coals exported to Holland, and yet England has no right to lay an internal tax on Holland. All goods brought out of France to England, or any other country, are charged with a small duty in France, which the consumers pay, and yet France has no right to tax other countries. And in my opinion the grievance is not that Britain puts duties upon her own manufactures exported to us, but that she forbids us to buy the like manufactures from any other country. This

she does however in virtue of her allowed right to regulate the commerce of the whole empire, allowed I mean by the Farmer, though I think whoever would dispute that right might stand upon firmer ground and make much more of the argument; but my reasons are too many and too long for a letter.

Mr. Grenville complained in the House that the Governor of New Jersey, New Hampshire, East and West Florida, had none of them obeyed the orders sent them to give an account of the manufactures carried on in their respective provinces. Upon hearing this I went after the House was up and got a sight of the reports made by the other governors. They are all much in the same strain, that there are no manufactures of any consequence; in Massachusetts a little coarse woollen only made in families for their own wear: glass and linen have been tried and failed. Rhode Island, Connecticut, and New York much the same. Pennsylvania has tried a linen manufactory but it is dropped, it being imported cheaper; there is a glass-house in Lancaster county, but it makes only a little coarse ware for the country neighbours. Maryland is clothed all with English manufactures. Virginia the same, except that in their families they spin a little cotton of their own growing. South Carolina and Georgia none. All speak of the dearness of labour that makes manufactures impracticable. Only the Governor of North Carolina parades with a large manufacture in his country that may be useful to Britain of *pine boards*; they having fifty saw mills on one river. These accounts are very satisfactory here, and induce the parliament to despise and take no notice of the Boston resolutions. I wish you would send your account before the meeting of next parliament. You have only to report a glass-house for coarse window glass and bottles, and some domestic manufactures of linen and woollen for family use that do not half clothe the inhabitants, all the finer goods coming from England and the like. I believe you will be puzzled to find any other, though I see great puffs in the papers.

The parliament is up and the nation in a ferment with the new elections. Great complaints are made that the natural interests of country gentlemen in their neighbouring boroughs, is overborne by the monied interest of the new people who have got sudden fortunes in the Indies, or as contractors, &c. 4000*l.* is now the market price for a borough. In short this whole venal nation is now at market, will be sold for about Two Millions; and might be bought out of the hands of the present bidders (if he would offer half a million more) by the very devil himself.

I shall wait on Lord H. again next Wednesday on behalf of the sufferers by Indian and French depredations to have an allowance of lands out of any new

grant made by the Indians so long solicited (and perhaps still to be solicited) in vain: I am your affectionate father, B. FRANKLIN.

I dined yesterday with General Monckton, Major Gates, Colonel Lee, and other officers who have served in and are friends of America. Monckton enquired kindly after your welfare.

TO THE COMMITTEE OF CORRESPONDENCE, PENNSYLVANIA.

GENTLEMEN, *London, March* 13, 1768.

On receipt of your letter of January 20, Mr. Jackson and myself waited on Lord Hillsborough, the new Secretary of State for American affairs, and communicated to him the contents, pressing the necessity of enforcing the orders already sent to Sir William Johnson for immediately settling the affair of the boundary line with the Indians. His Lordship was pleased to assure us, that he would cause duplicates of the orders to be forwarded by this packet and urge the completion of them.

We communicated also the copy of General Gage's letter, and the messages that had passed between the Governor and the House thereupon. His Lordship acquainted us that a letter from Governor Penn had been shown him by the proprietor importing that a horrid murder had lately been committed on the Indians, upon which the Governor had issued a proclamation for apprehending the murderer; and that a bill was under his and the council's consideration to prevent future settlements on Indian lands. But his Lordship remarked that these messages had not been communicated to him by the proprietor.

Government here begins to grow tired of the enormous expence of Indian affairs, and of maintaining posts in the Indian country, and it is now talked of as a proper measure to abandon these posts, demolishing all but such as the colonies may think fit to keep up at their own expence; and also to return the management of their own Indian affairs into the hands of the respective provinces as formerly. What the result will be is uncertain, counsels here being so continually fluctuating. But I have urged often that after taking those affairs out of our hands, it seems highly incumbent on the ministry not to neglect them, but to see that they are well managed and the Indians kept in peace. I think however that we should not too much depend on their doing this, but look to the matter a little ourselves, taking every opportunity of conciliating the affections of the Indians by seeing that they always have justice done them, and sometimes kindness. For I can assure you that

here are not wanting people who though not now in the ministry no one knows how soon they may be, and if they were ministers would take no step to prevent an Indian war in the colonies, being of opinion, which they express openly, that it would be a very good thing, in the first place to chastise the colonists for their undutifulness, and then to make them sensible of the necessity of protection by the troops of this country.

Mr. Jackson being now taken up with his election business, will hardly have time to write by this opportunity. But he joins with me in respects to you and the Assembly, and assurances of our most faithful services. I am, Gentlemen, your most obedient and most humble servant, B. FRANKLIN.

To JOSEPH GALLOWAY, ESQ.

London, March 13, 1768.

I wrote to you very fully per Falconer of February 17, and have since received yours of January 21, together with one from the Committee, and the messages which as you will see by my answer to the Committee I communicated to Lord Hillsborough. His lordship read them deliberately, and took notice that the message of the Assembly seemed to insinuate that the Governor had been tardy in bringing the former murderers to justice, which gave me an opportunity of explaining that matter to him; whereby he might also understand why the proprietor had not shown him the messages when he communicated the Governor's letter concerning the Indian uneasinesses, the law under his consideration for removing them, the late murder, and his proclamation. I shall wait on his Lordship again next Wednesday on our affairs, and show him moreover your letter with some other papers.

The old parliament is gone, and its enemies now find themselves at liberty to abuse it. I inclose you a pamphlet published the very hour of its prorogation. All the members are now in their counties and burroughs among their drunken electors; much confusion and disorder in many places, and such profusion of money as never was known before on any similar occasion. The first instance of bribery to be chosen a member, taken notice of on the Journals, is no longer ago than Queen Elizabeth's time, when the being sent to parliament was looked upon as a troublesome service, and therefore not sought after, it is said that such a one, " being a simple man, and conceiving it might be of some advantage to him, had given *four pounds* to the Mayor and Corporation that they might chuse him to serve them in parliament." The price is monstrously risen since that time, for it is now no less than 4000*l.*!

It is thought that near two millions will be spent this election; but those who understand figures and act by computation, say, the Crown has two millions a year in places and pensions to dispose of, and it is well worth while to engage in such a seven years lottery, though all that have tickets should not get prizes. I am, my dear friend, yours affectionately, B. FRANKLIN.

TO THE COMMITTEE OF CORRESPONDENCE, PENNSYLVANIA.

GENTLEMEN, *London, Saturday, April* 16, 1768.

I have just received your favour of February 20, directed to Mr. Jackson and myself, containing instructions for our conduct relating to the application for a repeal of the duty act, to the change of government, and to the legal tender of paper money; which instructions we shall observe to the best of our abilities. Mr. Jackson has read your letter, and is now reading the messages and other papers transmitted to us, which we shall lay before the Secretaries of State on Monday, and thereupon press the necessity of a change in the administration of our province. The parliament will have a short session, it is said, in May, when if any application is made for the repeal of that act by the agents of the other colonies we shall join them heartily, and do what we can likewise in the affair of paper money. In the mean time should an Indian war make it necessary to emit paper money with a legal tender, it may be considered how far the fourth clause in the act of the 24 Geo. II. might give countenance to your providing in that way for the emergency; that act not being altered or repealed by any later, it seems as if the parliament thought that clause not improper, though they have not expressly made the same provision for the other colonies. The mail being to go this evening, I can only add, that I am with the utmost respect for you and the Assembly, Gentlemen, your most obedient and most humble servant, B. FRANKLIN.

TO GOVERNOR FRANKLIN.

DEAR SON, *London, April* 16, 1768.

Since my last, a long one of March 13, nothing has been talked or thought of here but elections. There have been amazing contests all over the kingdom, 20 or 30,000*l.* of a side spent in several places, and inconceivable mischief done by debauching the people and making them idle, besides the immediate actual mischief done by drunken mad mobs to houses, windows, &c. The scenes have been horrible. London was illuminated two nights running at the command of the mob for the success of Wilkes in the Middlesex election; the

second night exceeded any thing of the kind ever seen here on the greatest occasions of rejoicing, as even the small cross streets, lanes, courts, and other out-of-the-way places were all in a blaze with lights, and the principal streets all night long, as the mobs went round again after two o'clock, and obliged people who had extinguished their candles to light them again. Those who refused had all their windows destroyed. The damage done and expense of candles has been computed at 50,000*l.* it must have been great, though probably not so much. The ferment is not yet over, for he has promised to surrender himself to the Court next Wednesday, and another tumult is then expected; and what the upshot will be no one can yet foresee. 'Tis really an extraordinary event, to see an outlaw and exile, of bad personal character, not worth a farthing, come over from France, set himself up as candidate for the capital of the kingdom, miss his election only by being too late in his application, and immediately carrying it for the principal county. The mob, (spirited up by numbers of different ballads sung or roared in every street) requiring gentlemen and ladies of all ranks as they passed in their carriages to shout for Wilkes and liberty, marking the same words on all their coaches with chalk, and No. 45 on every door; which extends a vast way along the roads into the country. I went last week to Winchester, and observed that for fifteen miles out of town, there was scarce a door or window shutter next the road unmarked; and this continued here and there quite to Winchester, which is 64 miles.

To Mr. Ross, Philadelphia.

Dear Sir, *London, May* 14, 1768.

I received your favour of March 13, and am extremely concerned at the disorders on our frontiers, and at the debility or wicked connivance of our government and magistrates, which must make property and even life more and more insecure among us, if some effectual remedy is not speedily applied. I have laid all the accounts before the ministry here. I wish I could procure more attention to them. I have urged over and over the necessity of the change we desire; but this country itself being at present in a situation very little better, weakens our argument that a Royal Government would be better managed and safer to live under than that of a proprietary. Even this capital, the residence of the King, is now a daily scene of lawless riot and confusion. Mobs patrolling the streets at noon-day, some knocking all down that will not roar for Wilkes and Liberty; courts of justice afraid to give judgment against him; coal-heavers and porters pulling down the houses of coal merchants that refuse to give them more

wages; sawyers destroying saw mills; sailors unrigging all the outward bound ships, and suffering none to sail 'till merchants agree to raise their pay; watermen destroying private boats and threatening bridges; soldiers firing among the mobs and killing men, women and children, which seems only to have produced an universal sullenness, that looks like a great black cloud coming on, ready to burst in a general tempest. What the event will be, God only knows. But some punishment seems preparing for a people who are ungratefully abusing the best constitution and the best king any nation was ever blessed with, intent on nothing but luxury, licentiousness, power, places, pensions, and plunder; while the ministry divided in their councils, with little regard for each other, worried by perpetual oppositions, in continual apprehension of changes, intent on securing popularity in case they should lose favour, have for some years past had little time or inclination to attend to our small affairs, whose remoteness makes them appear still smaller.

The Bishops here are very desirous of securing the Church of England in America and promoting its interest and enlargement by sending one of their order thither: but though they have long solicited this point with government here, they have not as yet been able to obtain it. So apprehensive are ministers of engaging in any novel measure.

I hope soon to have an opportunity of conferring with you, and therefore say no more at present on this subject. I am, my dear friend, yours affectionately, B. F.

To Joseph Galloway, Esq.

Dear Sir, *London, May* 14, 1768.

I received your favour of March 31. It is now with the messages &c. in the hands of the minister, so I cannot be more particular at present in answering it than to say, I should have a melancholy prospect in going home to such public confusion, if I did not leave greater confusion behind me. The newspapers and my letter of this day to Mr. Ross will inform you of the miserable situation this country is in. While I am writing, a great mob of coal porters fill the street, carrying a wretch of their business upon poles to be ducked, and otherwise punished at their pleasure for working at the old wages. All respect to law and government seems to be lost among the common people, who are moreover continually enflamed by seditious scribblers to trample on authority and every thing that used to keep them in order.

The parliament is now sitting, but will not continue long together, nor undertake any material business. The Court of King's Bench postponed giving sentence

against Wilkes on his outlawry till the next term, intimidated as some say by his popularity, and willing to get rid of the affair for a time till it should be seen what the parliament would conclude as to his membership. The commons, at least some of them, resent that conduct, which has thrown a burthen on them it might have eased them of, by pillorying or punishing him in some infamous manner, that would have given better ground for expelling him the house. His friends complain of it as a delay of justice, say the court knew the outlawry to be defective, and that they must finally pronounce it void, but would punish him by long confinement. Great mobs of his adherents have assembled before the prison, the guards have fired on them: it is said five or six are killed and sixteen or seventeen wounded, and some circumstances have attended this military execution, such as its being done by the Scotch regiment, the pursuing a lad and killing him at his father's house &c. &c. that exasperate people exceedingly, and more mischief seems brewing. Several of the soldiers are imprisoned. If they are not hanged it is feared there will be more and greater mobs; and if they are, that no soldier will assist in suppressing any mob hereafter. The prospect either way is gloomy. It is said the English soldiers cannot be confided in to act against these mobs, being suspected as rather inclined to favour and join them.

I am preparing for my return and hope for the pleasure of finding you well, when I shall have an opportunity of communicating to you more particularly the state of things here relating to our American affairs which I cannot so well do by letter. I inclose you the report of Sir M. L. counsel to the Board of Trade on one of your late acts. I suppose it has had its effect, so that the repeal will be of little consequence. In the mean time I am with sincere esteem and affection, Sir, your most obedient and most humble servant, B. FRANKLIN.

To GOVERNOR FRANKLIN.

DEAR SON, *London, July* 2, 1768.

Since my last I have received yours of May 10 dated at Amboy, which I shall answer particularly by next week's packet. I purpose now to take notice of that part wherein you say it was reported at Philadelphia I was to be appointed to a certain office here, which my friends all wished, but you did not believe it for the reason I had mentioned. Instead of my being appointed to a new office, there has been a motion made to deprive me of that I now hold, and I believe for the same reason, though that was not the reason given out, viz. my being too much of an American; but, as it came from Lord Sandwich our new

Post Master General who is of the Bedford party, and a friend of Mr. Grenville, I have no doubt that the reason he gave out, viz. my non-residence, was only the pretence, and that the other was the true reason; especially as it is the practice in many other instances to allow the non-residence of American officers who spend their salaries here, provided care is taken that the business be done by deputy or, otherwise.

The first notice I had of this was from my fast friend Mr. Cooper, Secretary of the Treasury. He desired me by a little note to call upon him there, which I did, when he told me, that the Duke of Grafton had mentioned to him some discourse of Lord Sandwich's as if the office suffered by my absence, and that it would be fit to appoint another, as I seemed constantly to reside in England: that Mr. Todd the Secretary of the Post Office had also been with the Duke, talking to the same purpose &c. That the Duke had wished him (Mr. Cooper) to mention this to me, and to say to me at the same time that though my going to my post might remove the objection, yet if I chose rather to reside in England, my merit was such in his opinion, as to entitle me to something better here, and it should not be his fault if I was not well provided for. I told Mr. Cooper that without having heard any exception had been taken to my residence here, I was really preparing to return home, and expected to be gone in a few weeks. That however I was extremely sensible of the Duke's goodness in giving me this intimation and very thankful for his favourable disposition towards me; that having lived long in England, and contracted a friendship and affection for many persons here, it could not but be agreeable to me to remain among them some time longer, if not for the rest of my life; and that there was no nobleman to whom I could from sincere respect for his great abilities, and amiable qualities, so cordially attach myself, or to whom I should so willingly be obliged for the provision he mentioned, as to the Duke of Grafton, if his Grace should think I could, in any station where he might place me, be serviceable to him and to the public. Mr. Cooper said he was very glad to hear I was still willing to remain in England, as it agreed so perfectly with his inclinations to keep me here. Wished me to leave my name at the Duke of Grafton's as soon as possible and to be at the Treasury again the next board day. I accordingly called at the Duke's, and left my card; and when I went next to the Treasury, his Grace not being there, Mr. Cooper carried me to Lord North, Chancellor of the Exchequer, who said very obligingly, after talking of some American affairs, I am told by Mr. Cooper that you are not unwilling to stay with us, I hope we shall find some way of making it worth your while. I thanked his lord-

ship, and said I should stay with pleasure if I could any ways be useful to government. He made me a compliment, and I took my leave, Mr. Cooper carrying me away with him to his country house at Richmond to dine and stay all night. He then told me that Mr. Todd had been again at the Duke of Grafton's and that upon his (Mr. Cooper's) speaking in my behalf, Mr. Todd had changed his stile, and said I had to be sure a great deal of merit with the office, having by my good management regulated the posts in America, so as greatly to encrease the revenue; that he had had great satisfaction in corresponding with me while I was there, and he believed they never had a better officer &c. The Thursday following, being the birth-day, I met with Mr. Todd at Court; he was very civil, took me with him in his coach to the Kings Arms in the city, where I had been invited to dine by Mr. Trevor, with the gentlemen of the Post-office; we had a good deal of chat after dinner between us too, in which he told me Lord Sandwich (who was very sharp) had taken notice of my stay in England, and said if *one* could do the business, why should there be *two* &c. On my telling Mr. Todd that I was going home, (which I still say to every body, not knowing but that what is intimated above may fail of taking effect) he looked blank and seemed disconcerted a little, which makes me think some friend of his was to have been vested with my place; but this is surmise only. We parted very good friends. That day I received another note from Mr. Cooper directing me to be at the Duke of Grafton's next morning, whose porter had orders to let me in. I went accordingly, and was immediately admitted. But his Grace being then engaged in some unexpected business, with much condescension and politeness made that apology for his not discoursing with me then, but wished me to be at the Treasury at twelve the next Tuesday. I went accordingly, when Mr. Cooper told me something had called the Duke into the country, and the board was put off, which was not known till it was too late to send me word; but was glad I was come, as he might then fix another day for me to go again with him into the country; the day fixed was Thursday. I returned yesterday, should have stayed till Monday, but for writing by these vessels. He assures me the Duke has it at heart to do something handsome for me. Sir John Pringle who is anxious for my stay, says, Mr. Cooper is the honestest man of a courtier that he ever knew, and he is persuaded they are in earnest to keep me. The piece I wrote against smuggling in the Chronicle of November last, and one in April on the labouring poor, (you will find it in the Gentleman's Magazine for that month) have been lately shown by Mr. Cooper to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and to the Duke, who have expressed themselves much pleased with them. I am to be again at the

Treasury on Tuesday next by appointment of Mr. Cooper. Thus particular I have been, that you may judge of this affair. For my own thoughts, I must tell you that though I did not think fit to decline any favour so great a man expressed an inclination to do me, because at court if one shews an unwillingness to be obliged it is often construed as a mark of mental hostility, and one makes an enemy; yet so great is my inclination to be at home, and at rest, that I shall not be sorry if this business falls through, and I am suffered to retire with my old post; nor indeed very sorry if they take that from me too on account of my zeal for America, in which some of my friends have hinted to me I have been too open. I shall soon be able, I hope by the next packet, to give you farther light. In the mean time as no one but Sir J. knows of the treaty, I talk daily of going in the August packet at farthest. And when the late Georgia appointment of me to be their agent is mentioned as what may detain me, I say, I have yet received no letters from that Assembly, acquainting me what their business may be; that I shall probably hear from them before that packet sails. That if it is extraordinary and of such a nature as to make my stay another winter necessary, I may possibly stay, because there would not be time for them to chuse another; but if it is common business I shall leave it with Mr. Jackson and proceed. I do not, by the way, know how that appointment came about, having no acquaintance that I can recollect in that country. It has been mentioned in the papers some time, but I have only just now received a letter from Governor Wright, informing me that he had that day given his assent to it, and expressing his desire to correspond with me on all occasions, saying the Committee, as soon as they could get their papers ready, would write to me and acquaint me with their business. We have lost Lord Clare from the Board of Trade. He took me home from Court, the Sunday before his removal, that I might dine with him as he said alone, and talk over American affairs. He seemed as attentive to them as if he was to continue ever so long. He gave me a great deal of flummery; saying that though at my examination I answered some of his questions a little pertly, yet he liked me from that day, for the spirit I showed in defence of my country; and at parting, after we had drank a bottle and half of claret each, he hugged and kissed me, protesting he never in his life met with a man he was so much in love with. This I write for your amusement. You see by the nature of this whole letter that it is to yourself only. It may serve to prepare your mind for any event that shall happen. If Mr. Grenville comes into power again in any department respecting America, I must refuse to accept of any thing that may seem to put me in his power, because I apprehend a breach between

the two countries; and that refusal will give offence. So that you see a turn of a die may make a great difference in our affairs. We may be either promoted, or discarded; one or the other seems likely soon to be the case, but 'tis hard to divine which. I am myself grown so old as to feel much less than formerly the spur of ambition, and if it were not for the flattering expectation, that by being fixed here I might more effectually serve my country, I should certainly determine for retirement, without a moment's hesitation. I am as ever, your affectionate father,

B. FRANKLIN.

To JOSEPH GALLOWAY, ESQ.

DEAR SIR, *London, July* 2, 1768.

Since my last nothing material has occurred here relating to American affairs, except the removal of Lord Clare from the head of the Board of Trade to the Treasury of Ireland, and the return of Lord Hillsborough to the Board of Trade as first Commissioner, retaining the title and powers of Secretary of State for the colonies. This change was very sudden and unexpected. My Lord Clare took me home from Court to dine with him but two days before, saying he should be without other company, and wanted to talk with me on sundry American businesses. We had accordingly a good deal of conversation on our affairs, in which he seemed to interest himself with all the attention that could be supposed in a minister who expected to continue in the management of them. This was on Sunday, and on the Tuesday following he was removed. Whether my Lord Hillsborough's administration will be more stable than others have been for a long time is quite uncertain; but as his inclinations are rather favourable towards us (so far as he thinks consistent with what he supposes the unquestionable rights of Britain), I cannot but wish it may continue, especially as these perpetual mutations prevent the progress of all business.

But another change is now talked of that gives me great uneasiness. Several of the Bedford party being now got in, it has been for some time apprehended that they would sooner or later draw their friend Mr. Grenville in after them. It is now said, he is to be Secretary of State in the room of Lord Shelburne. If this should take place, or if in any other shape he comes again into power, I fear his sentiments of the Americans and theirs of him, will occasion such clashings as may be attended with fatal consequences. The last accounts from your part of the world of the combinations relating to commerce with this country, and resolutions concerning the duties here laid upon it, occasion much serious reflection, and 'tis thought the

points in dispute between the two countries will not fail to come under the consideration of parliament early in next session. Our friends wonder that I persist in my intention of returning this summer, alledging that I might be of much more service to my country here than I can be there, and wishing me by all means to stay the ensuing winter, as the presence of persons well acquainted with America, and of ability to represent these affairs in a proper light, will then be highly necessary. My private concerns, however, so much require my presence at home, that I have not yet suffered myself to be persuaded by their partial opinion of me.

The tumults and disorders that prevailed here lately have now pretty well subsided. Wilkes's outlawry is reversed, but he is sentenced to twenty-two months imprisonment, and 1000*l.* fine, which his friends, who feared he would be pilloried, seem rather satisfied with. The importation of corn, a pretty good hay harvest, now near over, and the prospect of plenty from a fine crop of wheat makes the poor more patient, in hopes of an abatement in the price of provisions; so that unless want of employment by the failure of American orders should distress them, they are like to be tolerably quiet.

I purpose writing to you again by the packet that goes next Saturday, and therefore now only add that I am, with sincere esteem, dear Sir, your most obedient and most humble servant, B. FRANKLIN.

To * * *.

DEAR SIR, *London, Nov.* 28, 1768.

I received your obliging favour of the 12th instant. Your sentiments of the importance of the present dispute between Great Britain and the colonies, appear to me extremely just. There is nothing I wish for more than to see it amicably and equitably settled.

But Providence will bring about its own ends by its own means; and if it intends the downfal of a nation, that nation will be so blinded by its pride, and other passions, as not to see its danger, or how its fall may be prevented.

Being born and bred in one of the countries, and having lived long and made many agreeable connexions of friendship in the other, I wish all prosperity to both; but I have talked, and written so much and so long on the subject, that my acquaintance are weary of hearing, and the public of reading any more of it, which begins to make me weary of talking and writing; especially as I do not find that I have gained any point, in either country, except that of rendering myself suspected, by my impartiality; in England, of being too much an American, and in America

of being too much an Englishman. Your opinion, however, weighs with me, and encourages me to try one effort more, in a full, though concise statement of facts, accompanied with arguments drawn from those facts; to be published about the meeting of parliament, after the holidays.[1]

If any good may be done I shall rejoice; but at present I almost despair.

Have you ever seen the barometer so low as of late? The 22d instant mine was at 28, 41, and yet the weather fine and fair. With sincere esteem, I am, dear friend, yours affectionately, B. FRANKLIN.

To M. DUBOURG,[2] PARIS.

London, October 2, 1770.

I see with pleasure that we think pretty much alike on the subjects of English America. We of the colonies have never insisted that we ought to be exempt from contributing to the common expences necessary to support the prosperity of the empire. We only assert, that having parliaments of our own, and not having representatives in that of Great Britain, our parliaments are the only judges of what we can and what we ought to contribute in this case; and that the English parliament has no right to take our money without our consent. In fact, the British empire is not a single state; it comprehends many; and though the parliament of Great Britain has arrogated to itself the power of taxing the colonies, it has no more right to do so, than it has to tax Hanover. We have the same king, but not the same legislatures.

The dispute between the two countries has already lost England many millions sterling, which it has lost in its commerce, and America has in this respect been a proportionable gainer. This commerce consisted principally of superfluities; objects of luxury and fashion, which we can well do without; and the resolution we have formed of importing no more till our grievances are redressed, has enabled many of our infant manufactures to take root; and it will not be easy to make our people abandon them in future, even should a connection more cordial than ever succeed the present troubles.—I have indeed, no doubt that the parliament of England will finally abandon its present pretensions, and leave us to the peaceable enjoyment of our rights and privileges.

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[1] Uncertain what is the publication promised in this Letter; unless it alludes to the one entitled "Causes of the American Discontents before 1768."

[2] Translator of Dr. Franklin's Philosophical Works.

To Governor Franklin.

Dear Son, *London, Aug.* 17, 1772.

At length we have got rid of Lord Hillsborough, and Lord Dartmouth takes his place, to the great satisfaction of all the friends of America. You will hear it said among you (I suppose) that the interest of the Ohio planters has ousted him, but the truth is, what I wrote you long since, that all his brother ministers disliked him extremely, and wished for a fair occasion of tripping up his heels; so seeing that he made a point of defeating our scheme, they made another of supporting it, on purpose to mortify him, which they knew his pride could not bear. I do not mean that they would have done this if they had thought our proposal bad in itself, or his opposition well founded; but I believe if he had been on good terms with them, they would not have differed with him for so small a matter. The K. too was tired of him, and of his administration, which had weakened the affection and respect of the Colonies for a Royal Government, with which (I may say it to you) I used proper means from time to time that his M. should have due information and convincing proofs. More of this when I see you. The K.'s dislike made the others more firmly united in the resolution of disgracing H. by setting at nought his famous report. But now that business is done, perhaps our affair may be less regarded in the Cabinet and suffered to linger, and possibly may yet miscarry. Therefore let us beware of every word and action, that may betray a confidence in its success, lest we render ourselves ridiculous in case of disappointment. We are now pushing for a completion of the business, but the time is unfavourable, every body gone or going into the country, which gives room for accidents. I am writing by Falconer, and therefore in this only add that I am ever your affectionate father, B. Franklin.

P. S. The regard Lord D. has always done me the honour to express for me, gives me room to hope being able to obtain more in favour of our Colonies upon occasion, than I could for some time past.

To Governor Franklin.

Dear Son, *London, August* 19, 1772.

I received yours of June 30. I am vexed that my letter to you, written at Glasgow, miscarried; not so much that you did not receive it, as that it is probably in other hands. It contained some accounts of what passed in Ireland, which were for you only.

As Lord Hillsborough in fact got nothing out of me, I should rather suppose he threw me away as an orange that would yield no juice, and therefore not worth more squeezing. When I had been a little while returned to London I waited on him to thank him for his civilities in Ireland, and to discourse with him on a Georgia affair. The porter told me he was not at home. I left my card, went another time, and received the same answer, though I knew he was at home, a friend of mine being with him. After intermissions of a week each, I made two more visits, and received the same answer. The last time was on a levee day, when a number of carriages were at his door. My coachman driving up, alighted and was opening the coach door, when the porter, seeing me, came out, and surlily chid the coachman for opening the door before he had enquired whether my lord was at home; and then turning to me, said, "My Lord is not at home." I have never since been nigh him, and we have only abused one another at a distance. The contrast as you observe is very striking between his conversation with the Chief Justice, and his letter to you concerning your province. I know him to be as double and deceitful as any man I ever met with. But we have done with him, I hope, for ever. His removal has I believe been meditated ever since the death of the Princess Dowager. For I recollect that on my complaining of him about that time to a friend at Court whom you may guess, he told me, we Americans were represented by Hillsborough as an unquiet people not easily satisfied with any ministry, that however it was thought too much occasion had been given us to dislike the present: and asked me, whether, if he should be removed, I could name another likely to be more acceptable to us. I said, yes, there is Lord Dartmouth: we liked him very well when he was at the head of the Board formerly, and probably should like him again. This I heard no more of, but I am pretty sure it was reported where I could wish it, though I know not that it had any effect.

As to my situation here nothing can be more agreeable, especially as I hope for less embarrassment from the new minister. A general respect paid me by the learned, a number of friends and acquaintance among them with whom I have a pleasing intercourse; a character of so much weight that it has protected me when some in power would have done me injury, and continued me in an office they would have deprived me of; my company so much desired that I seldom dine at home in winter, and could spend the whole summer in the country houses of inviting friends if I chose it. Learned and ingenious foreigners that come to England, almost all make a point of visiting me, for my reputation is still higher abroad than here; several of the foreign ambassadors have assiduously cultivated

my acquaintance, treating me as one of their *corps*, partly I believe from the desire they have from time to time of hearing something of American affairs, an object become of importance in foreign courts, who begin to hope Britain's alarming power will be diminished by the defection of her Colonies; and partly that they may have an opportunity of introducing me to the gentlemen of their country who desire it. The K. too has lately been heard to speak of me with great regard. These are flattering circumstances, but a violent longing for home sometimes seizes me, which I can no otherways subdue but by promising myself a return next spring or next fall, and so forth. As to returning hither, if I once go back, I have no thoughts of it. I am too far advanced in life to propose three voyages more. I have some important affairs to settle at home, and considering my double expences here and there, I hardly think my salaries fully compensate the disadvantages. The late change however being thrown into the balance determines me to stay another winter.

P. S. August 22. I find I omitted congratulating you on the honour of your election in the Society for propagating the Gospel. There you match indeed my Dutch honour. But you are again behind, for last night I received a letter from Paris of which the inclosed is an extract, acquainting me that I am chosen *Associé etranger* (foreign member) of the Royal Academy there. There are but eight of these *Associés etrangers* in all Europe, and those of the most distinguished names for science. The vacancy I have the honour of filling, was made by the death of the late celebrated M. Van Swieten of Vienna. This mark of respect from the first Academy in the world, which Abbe Nolet, one of its members, took so much pains to prejudice against my doctrines, I consider as a kind of victory without ink-shed, since I never answered him. I am told he has but one of his sect now remaining in the Academy. All the rest who have in any degree acquainted themselves with electricity are as he calls them Franklinists. Yours, &c. B. FRANKLIN.

To JOSEPH GALLOWAY, ESQ.

DEAR FRIEND, *London, August* 22, 1772.

I acknowledged before the receipt of your favour of May 14, since which I have no line from you. It will be a pleasure to render any service to Mr. Tilghman whom you recommended.

The Acts passed in your winter and spring sessions I have not yet received, nor have I heard from Mr. Wilmot that they have been presented.

Lord Hillsborough, mortified by the Committee of Council's approbation of our grant in opposition to his report, has resigned. I believe when he offered to do so, he had such an opinion of his importance that he did not think it would be accepted; and that it would be thought prudent rather to set our grant aside than part with him. His colleagues in the ministry were all glad to get rid of him, and perhaps for this reason joined more readily in giving him that mortification. Lord Dartmouth succeeds him, who has much more favourable dispositions towards the colonies. He has heretofore expressed some personal regard for me, and I hope now to find our business with the board more easy to transact.

Your observations on the state of the Islands did not come to hand till after Lord Rochford had withdrawn his petition. His Lordship and the promoters of it were so roasted on the occasion, that I believe another of the kind will not very soon be thought of. The proprietor was at the expence of the opposition, and as I knew it would not be necessary, and thought it might be inconvenient to our affairs, I did not openly engage in it, but I gave some private assistance that I believe was not without effect; I think too that Mr. Jackson's opinion was of great service. I would lodge a copy of your paper in the Plantation Office against any similar future applications if you approve of it. I only think the Island holders make too great a concession to the Crown when they suppose it may have a right to quit-rent. It can have none in my opinion on the old grants from Indians, Swedes, and Dutch, where none was reserved. And I think those grants so clearly good as to need no confirmation, to obtain which I suppose is the only motive for offering such quit-rent. I imagine too, that it may not be amiss to affix a caveat in the Plantation Office in the behalf of holders of property in those Islands against any grant of them that may be applied for, till they have had timely notice and an opportunity of being fully heard. Mr. Jackson is out of town, but I shall confer with him on the subject as soon as he returns. I am ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

To JOSEPH GALLOWAY, ESQ.

DEAR FRIEND, *London, Dec.* 2, 1772.

I am glad you are returned again to a seat in the Assembly, where your abilities are so useful and necessary in the service of your country. We must not in the course of *public* life expect *immediate* approbation and *immediate* grateful acknowledgment of our services. But let us persevere through abuse and even injury. The internal satisfaction of a good conscience is always present, and

time will do us justice in the minds of the people, even those at present the most prejudiced against us.

I have given Dr. Denormandie a recommendation to a friend in Geneva, for which place he set out this morning; and I shall be glad of any opportunity of serving him when he returns to London. I see by the Pennsylvania gazette of October 21, that you are continued speaker, and myself agent, but I have no line from you or the committee relative to instructions. Perhaps I shall hear from you by Falconer. I find myself upon very good terms with our new minister Lord Dartmouth, who we have reason to think means well to the colonies. I believe all are now sensible that nothing is to be got by contesting with or oppressing us. Two circumstances have diverted me lately. One was, that being at the Court of Exchequer on some business of my own, I there met with one of the commissioners of the Stamp office, who told me he attended with a memorial from that board, to be allowed in their accounts the difference between their expence in endeavouring to establish those offices in America, and the amount of what they received, which from Canada and the West India islands was but about 1500*l.*, while the expence if I remember right was above 12,000*l.*, being for stamps and stamping, with paper and parchment returned upon their hands, freight &c. The other is the present difficulties of the India Company and of government on their account. The company have accepted bills which they find themselves unable to pay, though they have the value of two millions in tea and other India goods in their stores, perishing under a want of demand. Their credit thus suffering, and their stock falling 120 per cent, whereby the government will lose the 400,000*l.* per annum, it having been stipulated that it should no longer be paid if the dividend fell to that mark. And although it is known that the American market is lost by continuing the duty on tea, and that we are supplied by the Dutch who doubtless take the opportunity of smuggling other India goods among us with the tea, so that for the five years past we might probably have otherwise taken off the greatest part of what the company have on hand, and so have prevented their present embarrassment, yet the honour of government is supposed to forbid the repeal of the American tea duty; while the amount of all the duties goes on decreasing, so that the balance of this year does not (as I have it from good authority) exceed 80*l.* after paying the collection; not reckoning the immense expence of guarda costas, &c. Can an American help smiling at these blunders? though in a national light they are truly deplorable.

With the sincerest esteem and inviolable attachment I am, my dear friend, ever most affectionately yours, B. FRANKLIN.

To THOMAS CUSHING, ESQ.

SIR, *London, Dec. 2, 1772.*

The above is a copy of my last. A few days after my leaving your petition with Lord Dartmouth, his lordship sent for me to discourse with me upon it. After a long audience he was pleased to say, that notwithstanding all I had said or could say in support and justification of the petition, he was sure the presenting it at this time could not possibly produce any good: that the king would be exceedingly offended, but what steps his majesty would take upon it was uncertain; perhaps he would require the opinion of the judges or government lawyers which would surely be against us; perhaps he might lay it before parliament, and so the censure of both houses would be drawn down upon us: the most favourable thing to be expected was, a severe reprimand to the assembly by order of his Majesty, the natural consequence of which must be more discontent and uneasiness in the province. That possessed as he was with great good will for New England, he was extremely unwilling that one of the first acts of his administration with regard to the Massachusetts should be of so unpleasant a nature. That minds had been heated and irritated on both sides the water, but he hoped those heats were now cooling, and he was averse to the addition of fresh fuel; that as I had delivered the petition to him officially, he must present it if I insisted upon it; but he wished I would first consult my constituents, who might possibly on reconsideration think fit to order its being deferred. I answered that the great majority with which the petition and the resolves on which it was founded were carried through the house, made it scarce expectable that their order would be countermanded; that the slighting, evading or refusing to receive petitions from the colonies on some late occasions by the parliament had occasioned a total loss of the respect for and confidence in that body formerly subsisting so strongly in America, and brought on a questioning of their authority: that his lordship might observe that petitions came no more from thence to parliament, but to the king only: that the king appeared to be now the only connexion between the two countries; and that as a continued union was essentially necessary to the well-being of the whole empire, I should be sorry to see that link weakened as the other had been, that I thought it a dangerous thing for any government to refuse receiving petitions, and thereby prevent the subjects from giving vent to their griefs. His lordship interrupted me by replying that he did not refuse to deliver the petition;

that it should never justly be said of him, that he interrupted the complaints of his majesty's subjects, and that he must and would present it, as he had said before, whenever I should absolutely require it; but from motives of pure good will to the province, he wished me not to insist on it, till I should receive fresh orders. Finally, considering that since the petition was ordered there had been a change in the American administration, that the present minister was our friend in the repeal of the stamp act, and seems still to have good dispositions towards us, that you had mentioned to me the probability that the house would have remonstrated on all their other grievances, had not their time been taken up with the difficult business of a general valuation; and since the complaint of this petition was likely alone to give offence, it might perhaps be judged advisable to give the substance of all our complaints at once, rather than in parts and after a reprimand received; I say, upon the whole I thought it best not to disoblige him in the beginning of his administration by refusing him what he seemed so desirous of, a delay at least in presenting the petition, till farther directions should be received from my constituents. If after deliberation they should send me fresh orders I shall immediately obey them, and the application to the crown itself may possibly derive greater weight, from the reconsideration given it, while the temper of the house may be somewhat calmed by the removal of a minister who had rendered himself so obnoxious to them. Accordingly I consented to the delay desired, wherein I hope my conduct will not be disapproved.

With the greatest esteem and respect, I have the honour to be, sir, your and the committee's most obedient and most humble servant, B. FRANKLIN.

To THE HON. THOMAS CUSHING, ESQ.

SIR, (Private) *London, Jan. 5*, 1773.

I did myself the honour of writing to you on the 2d of December past, enclosing some original letters from persons in Boston, which I hope got safe to hand. I have since received your favour of October 27, which containing in a small compass so full an enumeration of our grievances, the steps necessary to remove them, and the happy effects that must follow, I thought that though marked *private*, it might be of use to communicate it to Lord Dartmouth, the rather too, as he would there find himself occasionally mentioned with proper respect, and learn that his character was esteemed in the colonies. Accordingly I wrote him a few lines and enclosed it a day or two before I was to wait on his lordship, that he might have a little time to consider the contents. When I next

attended him, he returned me the letter with great complacence in his countenance, said he was glad to find that people in America were disposed to think so favourably of him; that they did him but justice in believing he had the best disposition towards them, for he wished sincerely their welfare, though possibly he might not always think with them as to the means of obtaining that end. That the heads of complaint in your letter were many, some of them requiring much consideration, and therefore it could scarce be expected that a sudden change should be made in so many measures, supposing them all improper to be continued, which perhaps might not be the case. It was however his opinion that if the Americans continued quiet, and gave no fresh offence to government, those measures would be reconsidered, and such relief given as upon consideration should be thought reasonable. I need not remark that there is not much in such general discourse, but I could then obtain nothing more particular, except that his lordship expressed in direct terms his disapprobation of the instruction for exempting the colonies from taxation: which however was, as he said, in confidence to me, relying that no public mention should be made of his opinion on that head.

In the mean time, some circumstances are working in our favour with regard to the duties. It is found by the last year's accounts transmitted by the commissioners, that the balance in favour of Britain is but about 85*l.* after payment of salaries &c. exclusive of the charge of a fleet to enforce the collection. Then it is observed that the India company is so out of cash, that it cannot pay the bills drawn upon it, and its other debts, and at the same time so out of credit, that the Bank does not care to assist them, whence they find themselves obliged to lower their dividend; the apprehension of which has sunk their stock from 280 to 160, whereby several millions of property are annihilated, occasioning private bankruptcies and other distress, besides a loss to the public treasury of 400,000*l.* per annum which the company are not to pay into it as heretofore if they are not able to keep up their dividend at 12½. And as they have at the same time tea, and other India goods in their warehouses to the amount of four millions as some say, for which they want a market, and which, if it had been sold, would have kept up their credit, I take the opportunity of remarking in all companies the great imprudence of losing the American market by keeping up the duty on tea, which has thrown that trade into the hands of the Dutch, Danes, Swedes and French, who, according to the reports and letters of some custom-house officers in America, now supply by smuggling the whole continent, not with tea only, but accompany that article with other India goods amounting as supposed in the whole to 500,000*l.* sterling per annum.

This gives some alarm, and begins to convince people more and more of the impropriety of quarrelling with America, who at that rate might have taken off two millions and a half of those goods within these five years that the combination has subsisted, if the duty had not been laid or had been speedily repealed.

But our great security lies, I think, in our growing strength both in numbers and wealth, that creates an increasing ability of assisting this nation in its wars, which will make us more respectable, our friendship more valued, and our enmity feared, thence it will soon be thought proper to treat us not with justice only, but with kindness, and thence we may expect in a few years a total change of measures with regard to us; unless by a neglect of military discipline we should lose all martial spirit, and our western people become as tame as those in the eastern dominions of Britain, when we may expect the same oppressions, for there is much truth in the Italian saying *Make yourselves sheep and the wolves will eat you.* In confidence of this coming change in our favour, I think our prudence is meanwhile to be quiet, only holding up our rights and claims on all occasions in resolutions, memorials, and remonstrances; but bearing patiently the little present notice that is taken of them. They will all have their weight in time, and that time is at no great distance.

With the greatest esteem, I have the honour to be, sir, your most obedient and most humble servant, B. FRANKLIN.

TO GOVERNOR FRANKLIN.

DEAR SON, *London, Feb.* 14, 1773.

The opposition are now attacking the ministry on the St. Vincent's affair, which is generally condemned here, and some think Lord Hillsborough will be given up as the adviser of that expedition. But if it succeeds perhaps all will blow over. The ministry are more embarrassed with the India affairs; the continued refusal of North America to take tea from hence has brought infinite distress on the company, they imported great quantities in faith that that agreement could not hold; and now they can neither pay their debts nor dividends, their stock has sunk to the annihilating near three millions of their property, and government will lose its 400,000*l.* a year; while their teas lie on hand: the bankruptcies brought on partly by this means have given such a shock to credit as has not been experienced here, since the South Sea year. And this has affected the great manufacturers so much, as to oblige them to discharge their hands, and thousands of Spitalfields and Manchester weavers are now starving, or subsisting on charity.

Blessed effects of pride, pique, and passion in government, which should have no passions. Yours, B. FRANKLIN.

TO THE HON. THOMAS CUSHING, ESQ. BOSTON.

SIR, *London, March* 9, 1773.

I did myself the honour of writing to you the 2d of Dec. and the 5th January past. Since which I have received your favour of November 28, inclosing the votes and proceedings of the town of Boston, which I have reprinted here with a preface. Herewith I send you a few copies.

Governor Hutchinson's speech at the opening of your January session has been printed and industriously circulated here by (as I think) the ministerial people, which I take to be no good sign. The assembly's answer to it is not yet arrived, and in the mean while it seems to make impression on the minds of many not well acquainted with the dispute. The tea duty however is under the consideration of parliament, for a repeal on a petition from the East India Company, and no new measures have been talked of against America as likely to be taken during the present session; I was therefore preparing to return home by the spring ships: but have been advised by our friends to stay till the session is over; as the commission sent to Rhode island and discontents in your province, with the correspondence of the towns may possibly give rise to something here, when my being on the spot may be of use to our country. I conclude to stay a little longer. In the mean time I must hope that great care will be taken to keep our people quiet, since nothing is more wished for by our enemies than that by insurrections we should give a good pretence for increasing the military among us, and putting us under more severe restraints. And it must be evident to all that by our rapidly increasing strength we shall soon become of so much importance that none of our just claims of privilege will be as heretofore unattended to, nor any security we can wish for our rights be denied us.

With great respect I have the honour to be, sir, your most obedient humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

TO THE HON. THOMAS CUSHING, ESQ.

SIR, (Private) *London, April* 3, 1773.

My last was of the 9th past, since which nothing material has occurred relating to the colonies. The Assembly's answer to Governor Hutchinson's speech is not yet come over, but I find that even his friends here are apprehensive of some ill consequences from his forcing the Assembly into that dispute, and begin to say it was not prudently done, though they believe it meant

well. I inclose you two newspapers in which it is mentioned. Lord Dartmouth the other day expressed his wish to me, that some means could be fallen upon to heal the breach. I took the freedom to tell him, that he could do much in it if he would exert himself; I think I see signs of relenting in some others. The Bishop of St. Asaph's sermon before the Society for propagating the Gospel is much talked of for its Catholic spirit and favourable sentiments relating to the colonies. I will endeavour to get a copy to send you. With great esteem and respect, I have the honour to be, Sir, your most obedient and most humble servant, B. FRANKLIN.

To Governor Franklin.

DEAR SON, *London, April 6, 1773.*

I received yours of February 2, with the papers of information that accompany it.

I have sent to Mr. Galloway one of the Bishop of St. Asaph's sermons for your Society for propagating the Gospel. I would have sent you one, but you will receive it of course as a member. It contains such liberal and generous sentiments relating to the conduct of government here towards America, that Sir. J. P. says it was written in compliment to me. But from the intimacy of friendship in which I live with the author, I know he has expressed nothing but what he thinks and feels; and I honour him the more, that through the mere hope of doing good, he has hazarded the displeasure of the Court, and of course the prospect of further preferment. Possibly indeed the ideas of the Court may change; for I think I see some alarm at the discontents in New England, and some appearance of softening in the disposition of government, on the idea that matters have been carried too far there. But all depends upon circumstances and events: We govern from hand to mouth. There seems to be no wise regular plan.

I saw Lord Dartmouth about two weeks since. He mentioned nothing to me of your application for additional salary, nor did I to him, for I do not like it. I fear it will embroil you with your people.

While I am writing comes to hand yours of March 2. My letter by the October packet must have been sent as usual to the office by the bell-man. That being as you inform me, rubbed open as some of yours to me have been, gives an additional circumstance of probability to the conjecture made in mine of December 2. For the future I shall send letters of consequence to the office (when I use the packet conveyance) by my clerk.

Your accounts of the numbers of people, births, burials, &c. in your province, will be very agreeable to me, and particularly so to Dr. Price. Compared with former accounts, they will show the increase of your people, but not perfectly, as I think a great many have gone from New Jersey to the more Southern Colonies.

The parliament is like to sit till the end of June, as Mr. Cooper tells me. I had thoughts of returning home about that time. The Boston Assembly's answer to the Governor's speech, which I have just received, may possibly produce something here to occasion my longer stay. I am, your affectionate father, B. FRANKLIN.

To THE HON. THOMAS CUSHING, ESQ.

SIR, (Private) *London, May 6*, 1773.

I have received none of your favours since that of November 28. I have since written to you of the following dates, December 2, January 5, March 9, and April 3, which I hope got safe to hand.

The Council and Assembly's answer to Governor Hutchinson's speech I caused to be printed here as soon as I received them. His reply I see since printed also, but their rejoinder is not yet come. If he intended by reviving that dispute to recommend himself he has greatly missed his aim; for the Administration are chagrined with his officiousness, their intention having been to let all contention subside, and by degrees suffer matters to return to the old channel. They are now embarrassed by his proceedings; for if they lay the Governor's dispatches containing the declaration of the general court before parliament, they apprehend measures may be taken that will widen the breach; which would be more particularly inconvenient at this time, when the disturbed state of Europe gives some apprehensions of a general war; on the other hand, if they do not lay them before parliament they give advantage to opposition against themselves on some future occasion, in a charge of criminal neglect. Some say he must be a fool, others that through some misinformation he really supposed Lord Hillsborough to be again in office.

Yesterday I had a conversation with Lord D. of which I think it right to give you some account. On my saying that I had no late advices from Boston, and asking if his Lordship had any, he said, none since the Governor's second speech; but what difficulties that gentleman has brought us all into by his imprudence! though I suppose he meant well:—yet what can now be done? It is impossible that parliament can suffer such a declaration of the General Assembly, asserting its independency, to pass unnoticed. In my opinion, says I, it would be better and

more prudent to take no notice of it. It is *words* only. Acts of parliament are still submitted to there. No force is used to obstruct their execution. And while that is the case, parliament would do well to turn a deaf ear, and seem not to know that such declarations had ever been made. Violent measures against the province will not change the opinion of the people. Force could do no good. I do not know, says he, that force would be thought of; but perhaps an act may pass to lay them under some inconveniencies till they rescind that declaration.—Can they not withdraw it? I wish they could be persuaded to reconsider the matter, and do it of themselves voluntarily, and thus leave things between us on the old footing, the points undiscussed. Don't you think (continues his Lordship) such a thing possible? No, my Lord, says I, I think it is impossible. If they were even to wish matters back in the situation before the Governor's speech, and the dispute obliterated, they cannot withdraw their answers till he first withdraws his speech, which methinks would be an awkward operation that perhaps he will hardly be directed to perform. As to an act of parliament laying that country under inconveniencies, it is likely that will only put them as heretofore on some method of incommoding this country till the act is repealed; and so we shall go on injuring and provoking each other, instead of cultivating that good will and harmony so necessary to the general welfare. He said, that might be, and he was sensible our divisions must weaken the whole; for we are yet *one empire*, says he, whatever may be the sentiments of the Massachusetts Assembly, but he did not see how that could be avoided. He wondered, as the dispute was now of public notoriety, parliament had not already called for the dispatches; and he thought he could not omit much longer the communicating them, however unwilling he was to do it from his apprehension of the consequences. But what (his Lordship was pleased to say) if you were in my place, would or could you do? Would you hazard the being called to account in some future session of parliament, for keeping back the communication of dispatches of such importance? I said his Lordship could best judge, what in his situation was fittest for him to do. I could only give my poor opinion with regard to parliament, that supposing the dispatches laid before them, they would act most prudently in ordering them to lie on the table, and take no farther notice of them. For were I as much an Englishman as I am an American, and ever so desirous of establishing the authority of parliament, I protest to your Lordship I cannot conceive of a single step the parliament can take to increase it, that will not tend to diminish it; and after abundance of mischief they must finally lose it. The loss in itself perhaps would not be of much consequence, because it is an authority they can

never well exercise for want of due information and knowledge, and therefore it is not worth hazarding the mischief topreserve it. Then adding my wishes that I could be of any service in healing our differences, his Lordship said, I do not see any thing of more service than prevailing on the General Assembly if you can do it, to withdraw their answers to the Governor's speech. There is not, says I, the least probability they will ever do that; for the country is all of one mind upon the subject. Perhaps the Governor may have represented to your Lordship, that these are the opinions of a party only, and that great numbers are of different sentiments which may in time prevail. But if he does not deceive himself he deceives your Lordship: for in both houses, notwithstanding the influence appertaining to his office, there was not, in sending up those answers, a single dissenting voice. I do not recollect, says his Lordship, that the Governor has written any thing of that kind. I am told, however, by gentlemen from that country who pretend to know it, that there are many of the Governor's opinion, but they dare not show their sentiments. I never heard, said I, that any one has suffered violence for siding with the Governor. Not violence perhaps, said his Lordship, but they are reviled and held in contempt, and people do not care to incur the disesteem and displeasure of their neighbours. As I knew Governor Bernard had been in with his Lordship just before me, I thought he was probably one of these gentlemen informants, and therefore said, people who are engaged in any party or have advised any measures are apt to magnify the numbers of those they would have understood as approving their measures. His Lordship said, that was natural to suppose might be the present case; for whoever observed the conduct of parties here, must have seen it a constant practice; and he agreed with me, that though a *nemine contradicente* did not prove the absolute agreement of every man in the opinion voted, it at least demonstrated the great prevalence of that opinion.

Thus ended our conference. I shall watch this business till the parliament rises, and endeavour to make people in general as sensible of the inconveniences to this country that may attend a continuance of the contest, as the Spital-fields weavers seem already to be in their petition to the King, which I herewith send you. I have already the pleasure to find that my friend, the Bishop of St. Asaph's sermon, is universally approved and applauded, which I take to be no bad symptom. With sincere esteem and respect, I have the honour to be, Sir, your most obedient humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

To the Hon. Thomas Cushing, Esq.

Sir, *London, June* 2, 1773.

Since my last of the 6th past I have been honoured with yours of March 6 and 24, inclosing a petition to the King, and a letter to Lord Dartmouth. On considering the whole, I concluded that a longer delay of presenting the first petition and remonstrance was not likely to answer any good purpose, and therefore immediately waited on Lord Dartmouth, and delivered to him the letter, and the second petition, at the same time re-delivering the first, and pressed his Lordship to present them to his Majesty, which he promised to do. Enclosed I send you the answer I have just received from him, as this day's packet (the mail for which is to be made up and dispatched in a few hours) is the earliest opportunity, the ships for Boston not being to sail till the beginning of next week. By one of them I shall send a copy, with what observations occur to me on the occasion, which the time will not now permit me to write. In the mean while I would just beg leave to say that I hope the house will come to no hasty resolves upon it. The longer they deliberate, the more maturely they consider, the greater weight will attend their resolutions. With sincere respect, I am, Sir, your most obedient humble servant, B. Franklin.

To the Hon. Thomas Cushing, Esq.

Sir, *London, June* 4, 1773.

The above is a copy of mine per packet, which inclosed the original of his Majesty's answer to our petitions and remonstrance. I now send an exact copy of the same, which I did intend to accompany with some observations, and my sentiments on the general state of our affairs in this country and the conduct proper for us to hold on this occasion. But beginning to write I find the matter too copious, and the subject (on reflection) too important to be treated of in an hasty letter; and being told the ships sail to-morrow, I must postpone it to another opportunity.

It was thought at the beginning of the session, that the American duty on Tea would be taken off. But now the wise scheme is to take off so much duty here, as will make tea cheaper in America than foreigners can supply us, and to confine the duty there to keep up the exercise of the right. They have no idea that any people can act from any other principle but that of interest; and they believe that three pence in a pound of tea, of which one does not perhaps drink ten pounds in a year, is sufficient to overcome all the patriotism of an American.

I purpose soon to write to you very fully. As to the letters I communicated to you, though I have not been able to obtain leave to take copies or publish them, I have permission to let the originals remain with you as long as you may think it of any use to have them in possession. With great esteem and respect, I have the honour to be, Sir, your most obedient humble servant, B. FRANKLIN.

TO THE HON. THOMAS CUSHING, ESQ.

SIR, *London, July 7, 1773.*

I thank you for the pamphlets you have sent me containing the controversy between the Governor and the two houses. I have distributed them where I thought they might be of use. He makes perhaps as much of his argument as it will bear; but has the misfortune of being on the weak side, and so is put to shifts and quibbles, and the use of much sophistry and artifice to give plausibility to his reasonings. The Council and the Assembly have greatly the advantage in point of fairness, perspicuity, and force. His precedents of acts of parliament binding the colonies, and our tacit consent to those acts are all frivolous. Shall a guardian who has imposed upon, cheated and plundered a minor under his care, who was unable to prevent it, plead those impositions after his ward has discovered them, as precedents and authorities for continuing them. There have been precedents time out of mind for robbing on Hounslow Heath, but the highwayman who robbed there yesterday does nevertheless deserve hanging.

I am glad to see the resolves of the Virginia House of Burgesses. There are brave spirits among that people. I hope their proposal will be readily complied with by all the colonies. It is natural to suppose as you do, that if the oppressions continue, a congress may grow out of that correspondence. Nothing would more alarm our ministers; but if the colonies agree to hold a congress, I do not see how it can be prevented.

The instruction relating to the exemption of the commissioners I imagine is withdrawn; perhaps the other also relating to the agents, but of that I have heard nothing. I only wonder that the Governor should make such a declaration of his readiness to comply with an intimation in acting contrary to any instructions, if he had not already or did not soon expect a repeal of those instructions. I have not and shall never use your name on this or any similar occasion.

I note your directions relating to public and private letters, and shall not fail to observe them. At the same time I think all the correspondence should be in the speaker's power, to communicate such extracts only as he should think proper for

the house. It is extremely embarrassing to an agent to write letters concerning his transactions with ministers, which letters he knows are to be read in the house, where there may be Governor's spies who carry away parts, or perhaps take copies that are echoed back hither privately if they should not be, as sometimes they are, printed in the votes. It is impossible to write freely in such circumstances, unless he would hazard his usefulness, and put it out of his power to do his country any farther service. I speak this now, not upon my own account, being about to decline all public business, but for your consideration with regard to future agents.

And now we speak of agents, I must mention my concern that I should fall under so severe a censure of the house as that of neglect in their business. I have submitted to the reproof without reply in my public letter, out of pure respect. It is not decent to dispute a father's admonitions. But to you in private permit me to observe, that as to the two things I am blamed for not giving the earliest notice of, viz. the clause in the act relating to dock yards, and the appointment of salaries for the Governor and Judges; the first only seems to have some foundation. I did not know, but perhaps I ought to have known, that such a clause was intended. And yet in a parliament, that during the whole session refused admission to strangers, wherein near two hundred acts were passed, it is not so easy a matter to come at the knowledge of every clause in every act, and to give opposition to what may affect one's constituents, especially when it is not uncommon to smuggle clauses into a bill whose title shall give no suspicion, when an opposition to such clauses is apprehended. I say this is no easy matter. But had I known of this clause it is not likely I could have prevented its passing in the present disposition of government towards America, nor do I see that my giving earlier notice of its having passed could have been of much service. As to the other, concerning the Governor and Judges, I should hardly have thought of sending the House an account of it, if the minister had mentioned it to me, as I understood from their first letter to me, that they had already the best intelligence "of its being determined by administration to bestow large salaries on the Attorney General, Judges, and Governor of the province." I could not therefore possibly "give the *first notice* of this impending evil." I answered however "that there was no doubt of the intention of making Governors and some other officers independent of the people for their support, and that this purpose will be persisted in, if the American revenue is found sufficient to defray the salaries." This censure, though grievous, does not so much surprize me, as I apprehended all along from the beginning, that between the friends of an old agent, my predecessor who thought himself hardly used in his

dismission, and those of a young one impatient for the succession, my situation was not likely to be a very comfortable one, as my faults could scarce pass unobserved.

I think of leaving England in September. As soon as possible after my arrival in America, I purpose (God willing) to visit Boston, when I hope to have the pleasure of paying my respects to you. I shall then give every information in my power, and offer every advice relating to our affairs, (not so convenient to be written) that my situation here for so many years may enable me to suggest for the benefit of our country. Some time before my departure, I shall put your papers into the hands of Mr. Lee, and assist him with my counsel while I stay where there may be any occasion for it. He is a gentleman of parts and ability, and though he cannot exceed me in sincere zeal for the interest and prosperity of the province, his youth will easily enable him to serve it with more activity. I am, Sir, very respectfully, your obliged and most obedient humble servant, B. FRANKLIN.

TO THE HON. THOMAS CUSHING, ESQ.

SIR, *London, July 7, 1773.*

The parliament is at length prorogued without meddling with the state of America. Their time was much employed in the East India business: and perhaps it was not thought prudent to lay before them the advices from New England, though some threatening intimations had been given of such an intention. The King's firm answer (as it is called) to our petitions, and remonstrances, has probably been judged sufficient for the present. I forwarded that answer to you by the last packet, and sent a copy of it by a Boston ship the beginning of last month. Therein we are told "that his Majesty has well weighed the *subject matter*, and the expressions contained in those petitions; and that as he will ever attend to the *humble* petitions of his subjects, and be forward to redress every *real* grievance, so he is determined to support *the Constitution*, and resist with firmness every attempt to derogate from the authority of the *supreme legislature*."

By this it seems that some exception is taken to the *expressions* of the petitions as not sufficiently humble, that the grievances complained of are not thought *real* grievances, that parliament is deemed the supreme legislature, and its authority over the colonies supposed to be the *constitution*. Indeed the last idea is expressed more fully in the next paragraph, where the words of the act are used declaring the right of the crown with the advice of parliament to make laws of *sufficient force and validity* to bind its subjects in America *in all cases whatsoever*.

When one considers the King's situation, surrounded by ministers, counsellors, and judges learned in the law, who are all of this opinion, and reflect how necessary it is for him to be well with his parliament, from whose yearly grants, his fleets' and armies are to be supported, and the deficiencies of his civil list supplied, it is not to be wondered at that he should be firm in an opinion established as far as an act of parliament could establish it, by even the friends of America at the time they repealed the Stamp act; and which is so generally thought right by his lords and commons, that any act of his, countenancing the contrary, would hazard his embroiling himself with those powerful bodies. And from hence it seems hardly to be expected from him that he should take any step of that kind. The grievous instructions indeed might be withdrawn without their observing it, if his Majesty thought fit so to do; but under the present prejudices of all about him, it seems that this is not yet likely to be advised.

The question then arises, how are we to obtain redress? If we look back into the parliamentary history of this country, we shall find, that in similar situations of the subjects here, redress would seldom be obtained but by withholding aids when the sovereign was in distress, till the grievances were removed. Hence the rooted custom of the Commons to keep money bills in their own disposition, not suffering even the Lords to meddle in grants, either as to quantity, manner of raising, or even in the smallest circumstance. This country pretends to be collectively our sovereign. It is now deeply in debt. Its funds are far short of recovering their par since the last war: another would distress it still more. Its people diminish, as well as its credit. Men will be wanted as well as money. The colonies are rapidly increasing in wealth and numbers. In the last war they maintained an army of 25000. A country able to do that, is no contemptible ally. In another war they may perhaps do twice as much with equal ease. Whenever a war happens our aid will be wished for, our friendship desired and cultivated, our good will courted: then is the time to say, *redress our grievances*. You take money from us by force, and now you ask it of voluntary grant. You cannot have it both ways. If you chuse to have it without our consent, you must go on taking it that way, and be content with what little you can so obtain. If you would have our free gifts, desist from your compulsive methods, and acknowledge our rights, and secure our future enjoyment of them. Our claims will then be attended to, and our complaints regarded. By what I perceived not long since, when a war was apprehended with Spain, the different countenance put on by some great men here towards those who were thought to have a little influence in America, and the language, that began

to be held with regard to the then minister for the colonies, I am confident that if that war had taken place he would have been immediately dismissed, all his measures reversed, and every step taken to recover our affection and procure our assistance. Thence I think it fair to conclude that similar effects will probably be produced by similar circumstances.

But as the strength of an Empire depends not only on the *union* of its parts, but on their *readiness* for united exertion of their common force; and as the discussion of rights may seem unseasonable in the commencement, of actual war, and the delay it might occasion be prejudicial to the common welfare: as likewise the refusal of one or a few colonies, would not be so much regarded if the others granted liberally, which perhaps by various artifices and motives they might be prevailed on to do; and as this want of concert would defeat the expectation of general redress that otherwise might be justly formed; perhaps it would be best and fairest, for the colonies in a general congress now in peace to be assembled, or by means of the correspondence lately proposed after a full and solemn assertion and declaration of their rights to engage firmly with each other, that they will never grant aids to the crown in any general war till those rights are recognized by the King and both houses of parliament; communicating at the same time to the crown this their resolution. Such a step I imagine will bring the dispute to a crisis: and whether our demands are immediately complied with, or compulsory measures thought of to make us rescind them, our ends will finally be obtained, for even the odium accompanying such compulsory attempts will contribute to unite and strengthen us, and in the mean time all the world will allow that our proceeding has been honourable.

No one doubts the advantage of a strict union between the mother-country and the colonies, if it may be obtained and preserved on equitable terms. In every fair connection each party should find its own interest. Britain will find her's in our joining with her in every war she makes to the greater annoyance and terror of her enemies; in our employment of her manufacturers and enriching her merchants by our commerce; and her government will feel some additional strengthening of its hands, by the disposition of our profitable posts and places. On our side, we have to expect the protection she can afford us, and the advantage of a common umpire in our disputes, thereby preventing wars we might otherwise have with each other, so that we can without interruption go on with our improvements, and increase our numbers. We ask no more of her, and she should not think of forcing more from us. By the exercise of prudent moderation on her part, mixed with a

little kindness; and by a decent behaviour on ours, excusing where we can excuse from a consideration of circumstances, and bearing a little with the infirmities of her government as we would with those of an aged parent, though firmly asserting our privileges, and declaring that we mean at a proper time to vindicate them, this advantageous union may still be long continued. We wish it, and we may endeavour it, but God will order it as to his wisdom shall seem most suitable. The friends of liberty here wish we may long preserve it on our side the water, that they may find it there, if adverse events should destroy it here. They are therefore anxious and afraid lest we should hazard it by premature attempts in its favour. They think we may risque much by violent measures, and that the risque is unnecessary, since a little time must infallibly bring us all we demand or desire, and bring it us in peace and safety. I do not presume to advise. There are many wiser men among you, and I hope you will be directed by a still superior wisdom.

With regard to the sentiments of people in general here concerning America, I must say that we have among them many friends, and well wishers. The dissenters are all for us, and many of the merchants and manufacturers. There seems to be even among the country gentlemen a general sense of our growing importance, a disapprobation of the harsh measures with which we have been treated, and a wish that some means may be found of perfect reconciliation. A few members of parliament in both houses, and perhaps some in high office have in a degree the same ideas, but none of these seem willing as yet to be active in our favour, lest adversaries should take advantage and charge it upon them as a betraying the interests of this nation. In this state of things no endeavour of mine or our other friends here "to obtain a repeal of the acts so oppressive to the colonists, or the orders of the crown so destructive of the charter rights of our province in particular, can expect a sudden success." By degrees and a judicious improvement of events we may work a change in minds and measures, but otherwise such great alterations are hardly to be looked for.

I am thankful to the House for their kind attention in repeating their grant to me of six hundred pounds. Whether the instruction restraining the Governor's assent is withdrawn or not, or is likely to be I cannot tell, having never solicited or even once mentioned it to Lord Dartmouth, being resolved to owe no obligation to the favour of any minister. If from a sense of right, that instruction should be recalled, and the general principle on which it was founded is given up, all will be very well: but you can never think it worth while to employ an agent here if his being paid or not is to depend on the breath of a minister, and I should think it a

situation too suspicious and therefore too dishonourable for me to remain in a single hour. Living frugally I am under no immediate necessity, and if I serve my constituents faithfully, though it should be unsuccessfully, I am confident they will always have it in their inclination, and some time or other in their power to make their grants effectual.

A gentleman of our province Captain Calef is come hither as an agent for some of the eastern townships, to obtain a confirmation of their lands. Sir Francis Bernard seems inclined to make use of this person's application for promoting a separation of that country from your province and making it a distinct government, to which purpose he prepared a draft of a memorial for Calef to present, setting forth not only the hardship of being without security in the property of their improvements, but also of the distress of the people there for want of government; that they were at too great a distance from the seat of government in the Massachusetts to be capable of receiving the benefits of government from thence, and expressing their willingness to be separated and formed into a new province &c. With this draft Sir Francis and Mr. Calef came to me to have my opinion. I read it, and observed to them that though I wished the people quieted in their possessions, and would do any thing I could to assist in obtaining the assurance of their property, yet as I knew the province of Massachusetts had a right to that country, of which they were justly tenacious, I must oppose that part of the memorial if it should be presented. Sir Francis allowed the right, but proposed that a great tract of land between Merrimack, and Connecticut rivers which had been allotted to New Hampshire might be restored to our province by order of the crown, as a compensation. This he said would be of more value to us than that eastern country, as being nearer home &c. I said I would mention it in my letters, but must in the mean time oppose any step taken in the affair before the sentiments of the general court should be known, as to such an exchange if it were offered. Mr. Calef himself did not seem fond of the draft, and I have not seen him, or heard any thing farther of it since, but I shall watch it.

Be pleased to present my dutiful respects to the house, and believe me with sincere and great esteem, Sir, your most obedient and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

To MR. MATHER, BOSTON.

REVEREND SIR, *London, July* 7, 1773.

The remarks you have added, on the late proceedings against

America are very just and judicious: and I cannot see any impropriety in your making them, though a minister of the Gospel. This kingdom is a good deal indebted for its liberties to the public spirit of its ancient clergy, who joined with the Barons in obtaining Magna Charta, and joined heartily in forming the curses of excommunication against the infringers of it. There is no doubt but the claim of parliament, of authority to make laws *binding on the colonies in all cases whatsoever*, includes an authority to change our religious constitution, and establish popery or Mahometanism if they please in its stead, but, as you intimate, *power* does not infer *right*; and as the right is nothing and the *power* (by our increase) continually diminishing, the one will soon be as insignificant as the *other*. You seem only to have made a small mistake in supposing they modestly avoided to declare they had a right, the words of the act being "that they have and of *right* ought to have full power &c."

Your suspicion that sundry others besides Governor Bernard "had written hither their opinions and counsels encouraging the late measures to the prejudice of our country, which have been too much heeded and followed," is, I apprehend, but too well founded. You call them "traitorous individuals," whence I collect, that you suppose them of our own country. There was among the twelve Apostles one traitor who betrayed with a kiss. It should be no wonder therefore, if among so many thousand true patriots as New England contains, there should be found even twelve Judases, ready to betray their country for a few paltry pieces of silver. Their *ends* as well as their views ought to be similar. But all the oppressions evidently work for our good. Providence seems by every means intent on making us a great people. May our virtues public and private grow with us, and be durable, that liberty civil and religious, may be secured to our posterity, and to all from every part of the old world that take refuge among us.

With great esteem and my best wishes for a long continuance of your usefulness, I am, Reverend Sir, your most obedient humble servant, B. FRANKLIN.

To DR. COOPER, BOSTON.

DEAR SIR, *London, July 7, 1773.*

I received your very valuable favours of March 15, and April 23. It rejoices me to find your health so far restored that your friends can again be benefited by your correspondence.

The governor was certainly out in his politics, if he hoped to recommend himself thereby entering upon that dispute with the assembly. His imprudence in bring-

ing it at all upon the tapis and his bad management of it, are almost equally censured. The council and assembly on the other hand have by the coolness, clearness and force of their answers gained great reputation.

The unanimity of our towns in their sentiments of liberty gives me great pleasure, as it shows the generally enlightened state of our people's minds and the falsehood of the opinion much cultivated here by the partizans of arbitrary power in America, that only a small faction among us were discontented with the late measures. If that unanimity can be discovered in all the colonies, it will give much greater weight to our future remonstrances. I heartily wish with you that some line could be drawn, some bill of rights established for America, that might secure peace between the two countries, so necessary for the prosperity of both. But I think little attention is like to be afforded by our ministers to that salutary work till the breach becomes greater and more alarming, and then the difficulty of repairing it will be greater in a tenfold proportion.

You mention the surprize of gentlemen to whom those letters have been communicated, at the restrictions with which they were accompanied, and which they suppose render them incapable of answering any important end. One great reason of forbidding their publication, was an apprehension that it might put all the possessors of such correspondence here upon their guard, and so prevent the obtaining more of it. And it was imagined that showing the originals to so many as were named and to a few such others as they might think fit, would be sufficient to establish the authenticity and to spread through the province so just an estimation of the writers, as to strip them of all their deluded friends and demolish effectually their interest and influence. The letters might be shown even to some of the governor's and lieutenant governor's partizans and spoken of to every body; for there was no restraint proposed to talking of them, but only to copying. However the terms given with them could only be those with which they were received.

The great defect here is in all sorts of people a want of attention to what passes in such remote countries as America, an unwillingness to read any thing about them if it appears a little lengthy; and a disposition to postpone the consideration even of the things they know they must at last consider, that so they may have time for what more immediately concerns them and withal enjoy their amusements, and be undisturbed in the universal dissipation. In other respects, though some of the great regard us with a jealous eye, and some are angry with us, the majority of the nation rather wish us well, and have no desire to infringe our liberties. And

many console themselves under the apprehension of declining liberty here, that they or their posterity shall be able to find her safe and vigorous in America. With sincere and great esteem, I am &c. B. FRANKLIN.

To GOVERNOR FRANKLIN.

DEAR SON, *London, July* 14, 1773.

I am glad to find by yours of May 4, that you have been able to assist Josiah Davenport a little; but vexed that he and you should think of putting me upon a solicitation which it is impossible for me to engage in. I am not upon terms with Lord North to ask any such favour from him. Displeased with something he said relating to America, I have never been at his levees, since the first. Perhaps he has taken that amiss. For last week we met occasionally at Lord Le Despencer's in our return from Oxford, where I had been to attend the solemnity of his installation, and he seemed studiously to avoid speaking to me. I ought to be ashamed to say that on such occasions I feel myself to be as proud as any body. His lady indeed was more gracious. She came, and sat down by me on the same sopha, and condescended to enter into a conversation with me agreeably enough, as if to make some amends. Their son and daughter were with them. They staid all night, so that we dined, supped, and breakfasted together, without exchanging three sentences. But had he ever so great a regard for me, I could not ask that office, trifling as it is, for any relation of mine. And detesting as I do the whole system of American customs, believing they will one day bring on a breach through the indiscretion and insolence of those concerned in the collection, I should never wish to see one so near to me in that business. If you think him capable of acting as deputy secretary, I imagine you might easily obtain that for him of Mr. Morgann. He has lately been with me, is always very complaisant, and understanding I was about returning to America, requested my interest to obtain for him the *Agency for your province*. His friend Sir Watkin Lewes, who was formerly candidate for the same *great place*, is now High Sheriff of London, and in the way of being Lord Mayor. The new Sheriffs elect, are (could you think it?) both Americans, viz. Mr. Sayre the New Yorker, and Mr. W. Lee, brother to Dr. Lee. I am glad you stand so well with Lord Dartmouth. I am likewise well with him, but he never spoke to me of augmenting your salary. He is truly a good man, and wishes sincerely a good understanding with the colonies, but does not seem to have strength equal to his wishes. Between you and me, the late measures have been, I suspect, very much the king's own, and he has in some cases a great

share of what his friends call *firmness.* Yet by some pains-taking and proper management the wrong impressions he has received may be removed, which is perhaps the only chance America has for obtaining *soon* the redress she aims at. This entirely to yourself.

And now we are among great folks, let me tell you a little of Lord Hillsborough. I went down to Oxford with and at the instance of Lord Le Despencer, who is on all occasions very good to me, and seems of late very desirous of my Company. Mr. Todd too was there, who has some attachment to Lord H. and in a walk we were taking told me as a secret that Lord H. was much chagrined at being out of place, and could never forgive me for "writing that pamphlet against his report about the Ohio. I assured him, says Mr. T. that I knew you did not write it; and the consequence is, that he thinks I know the contrary, and wanted to impose upon him in your favour; and so I find he is now displeased with me, and for no other cause in the world. His friend Bamber Gascoign too says that they *well knew* it was written by Dr. F. who was one of the most mischievous men in England." That same day Lord H. called upon Lord Le D. whose chamber and mine were together in Queen's College. I was in the inner room shifting, and heard his voice, but did not see him as he went down stairs immediately with Lord Le D. who mentioning that I was above, he returned directly, and came to me in the pleasantest manner imaginable. "Dr. F." says he, "I did not know 'till this minute that you were here, and I am come back *to make you my bow.* I am glad to see you at Oxford, and that you look so well &c." In return for this extravagance I complimented him on his son's performance in the theatre, though indeed it was but indifferent; so that account was settled. For as people say when they are angry if he *strikes me,* I'll strike him again, I think sometimes it may be right to say, *if he flatters me, I'll flatter him again.* This is lex talionis, returning offences in kind. His son however (Lord Fairford) is a valuable young man, and his daughters, ladies Mary and Charlotte, most amiable young women. My quarrel is only with him, who of all the men I ever met with is surely the most unequal in his treatment of people, the most insincere, and the most wrong headed; witness besides his various behaviour to me, his duplicity in encouraging us to ask for more land, ask for *enough to make a province,* when we at first asked only for 2, 500,000 acres, were his words, pretending to befriend our application, then doing every thing to defeat it, and reconciling the first to the last by saying to a friend, that he meant to defeat it from the beginning; and that his putting us upon asking so much was with that very view, supposing it too much to be granted. Thus by the way, his mortification becomes

double. He has served us by the very means he meant to destroy us, and tript up his own heels into the bargain. Your affectionate father, B. FRANKLIN.

To MR. WINTHROP, BOSTON.

DEAR SIR, *London, July 25, 1773.*

I am glad to see that you are elected into the council, and are about to take part in our public affairs. Your abilities, integrity, and sober attachment to the liberties of our country, will be of great use in this tempestuous time, in conducting our little bark into safe harbour. By the Boston newspapers, there seems to be among us some violent spirits, who are for an immediate rupture. But I trust the general prudence of our countrymen will see, that by our growing strength we advance fast to a situation in which our claims must be allowed; that by a premature struggle we may be crippled and kept down another age; that as between friends every affront is not worth a duel, between nations every injury not worth a war, so between the governed and governing every mistake in government, every incroachment on right is not worth a rebellion. 'Tis in my opinion sufficient for the present that we hold them forth on all occasions, not giving up any of them, using at the same time every means to make them generally understood and valued by the people; cultivating a harmony among the colonies, that their union in the same sentiments may give them greater weight: remembering withal, that this Protestant country, (our mother though lately an unkind one) is worth preserving, and that her weight in the scale of Europe, and her safety in a great degree may depend on our union with her. Thus conducting, I am confident we may in a few years, obtain every allowance of and every security for our inestimable privileges, that we can wish or desire.

With great and sincere esteem, I am, B. FRANKLIN.

To THE HON. THOMAS CUSHING, ESQ.

SIR, *London, July 25, 1773.*

I am favoured with yours of June 14 and 16, containing some copies of the resolves of the committee upon the letters. I see by your account of the transaction, that you could not well prevent what was done. As to the report of other copies being come from England, I know that could not be. It was an expedient to disengage the house. I hope the possession of the originals, and the proceedings upon them will be attended with salutary effects to the province, and then I shall be well pleased.

I observe that you mention that no person besides Dr. Cooper and one of the committee knew they came from me. I did not accompany them with any request of being myself concealed, for believing what I did to be in the way of my duty as agent, though I had no doubt of its giving offence, not only to the parties exposed, but to administration here, I was regardless of the consequences. However since the letters themselves are now copied and printed contrary to the promise I made, I am glad my name has not been heard on the occasion, and as I do not see it could be of any use to the public, I now wish it may continue unknown; though I hardly expect it. As to yours, you may rely on my never mentioning it, except that I may be obliged to show your letter in my own vindication to the person only who might otherwise think he had reason to blame *me* for breach of engagement. It must surely be seen here, that after such a detection of their duplicity in pretending a regard and affection to the province while they were undermining its privileges, it is impossible for the crown to make any good use of their services, and that it can never be for its interest to employ servants who are under such universal odium. The consequence one would think should be their removal. But perhaps it may be to titles, or to pensions—if your revenue can pay them.

I am with great esteem, Sir, your most obedient humble servant, B. F.

To Dr. Cooper, Boston.

Dear Sir, *London, July 25*, 1773.

I wrote to you on the 7th instant pretty fully, and am since favoured with yours of June 14.

I am much pleased with the proposal of the Virginia Assembly and the respectful manner in which it has been received by ours. I think it likely to produce very salutary effects.

I am glad to know your opinion that those letters came seasonably, and may be of public utility. I accompanied them with no restriction relating to myself; my duty to the province as their agent, I thought required the communication of them, as far as I could; I was sensible I should make enemies there, and perhaps might offend government here; but those apprehensions I disregarded. I did not expect, that my sending them could be kept a secret: but since it is such hitherto, I now wish it may continue so, because the publication of the letters contrary to my engagement, has changed the circumstances. If they serve to diminish the influence and demolish the power of the parties whose correspondence has been, and probably would have continued to be so mischievous to the interests and rights of the pro-

vince, I shall on that account be more easy under any inconveniences I may suffer either here or there; and shall bear as well as I can the imputation of not having taken sufficient care to insure the performance of my promise.

I think government can hardly expect to draw any future service from such instruments, and one would suppose they must soon be dismissed. We shall see.

I hope to be favoured with a continuance of your correspondence and intelligence, while I stay here, it is highly useful to me, and will be as it always has been pleasing every where.

I am ever, dear Sir, your obliged and most obedient humble servant, B. F.

To the Hon. Thomas Cushing, Esq.

Sir, *London, Aug. 24, 1773.*

I received duly your several favours of June 25, 26, and 30, with the papers inclosed. My Lord Dartmouth being at his country seat in Staffordshire, I transmitted to him the address for the removal of the Governor and Lieutenant Governor, and Mr. Bollan and I jointly transmitted the letter to his Lordship from both houses. I delivered to Mr. Bollan one set of the authenticated copies of the letters, and we shall co-operate in the business we are charged with.

I am told that the Governor has requested leave to come home; that some great persons about the court do not think the letters, now they have seen them, a sufficient foundation for the resolves, that therefore it is not likely he will be removed, but suffered to resign, and that some provision will be made for him here. But nothing I apprehend is likely to be done soon, as most of the great officers of state who composed the privy council, are in the country, and likely to continue till the parliament meets, and perhaps the above may be chiefly conjecture.

I have informed Mr. Lee, that in case there should be an hearing, I was directed to engage him as council for the province; that though I had received no money I would advance what might be necessary; those hearings by council being expensive.

I purpose writing to you again by the packet, and am with the greatest respect, Sir, your most obedient humble servant, B. Franklin.

No determination is yet public on the case of Mr. Lewis against Governor Wentworth, which has been a very costly hearing to both sides.

To Governor Franklin.

Dear Son, *London, Sept.* 1, 1773.

I have now before me yours of July 5 and 6. The August packet is not yet arrived.

Dr. Cooper of New York's opinion of the author of the sermon, however honourable to me, is injurious to the good Bishop; and therefore I must say in justice and truth, that I knew nothing of his intention to preach on the subject, and saw not a word of the sermon till it was printed. Possibly some preceding conversation between us may have turned his thoughts that way; but if so, that is all.

I think the resolutions of the New England townships must have the effect they seem intended for, viz. to show that the discontents were really general, and their sentiments concerning their rights unanimous and not the fiction of a few demagogues, as their Governors used to represent them here. And therefore not useless though they should not as yet induce government to acknowledge their claims. That people may probably think it sufficient for the present to assert and hold forth their rights, secure that sooner or later they must be admitted and acknowledged. The declaratory law here, had too its use, viz. to prevent or lessen at least a clamour against the ministry that repealed the Stamp Act, as if they had given up the right of this country to govern America. Other use indeed it could have none, and I remember Lord Mansfield told the Lords, when upon that bill, that it was nugatory. To be sure in a dispute between two parties about rights, the declaration of one party can never be supposed to bind the other.

It is said there is now a project on foot to form an union with Ireland, and that Lord Harcourt is to propose it at the next meeting of the Irish parliament. The eastern side of Ireland are averse to it; supposing that when Dublin is no longer the seat of their government it will decline, the harbour being but indifferent, and that the western and southern ports will rise and flourish on its ruins, being good in themselves and much better situated for commerce. For these same reasons, the western and southern people are inclined to the measure, and 'tis thought it may be carried. But these are difficult affairs, and usually take longer time than the projectors imagine. Mr. Crowley, the author of several proposals for uniting the colonies with the mother-country, and who runs about much among the ministers, tells me the Union of Ireland is only the first step towards a general union. He is for having it done by the parliament of England without consulting the colonies, and he will warrant, he says, that if the terms proposed are equitable they will all come in one after the other. He seems rather a little cracked upon the subject.

It is said here that the famous Boston letters were sent chiefly, if not all, to the late Mr. Wheatly. They fell into my hands, and I thought it my duty to give some principal people there a sight of them, very much with this view, that when they saw the measures they complained of took their rise in a great degree from the representations and recommendations of their own countrymen, their resentment against Britain on account of those measures might abate, as mine had done, and a reconciliation be more easily obtained. In Boston they concealed who sent them, the better to conceal who received and communicated them. And perhaps it is as well that it should continue a secret. Being of that country myself I think those letters more heinous than you seem to think them; but you had not read them all, nor perhaps the council's remarks on them. I have written to decline their agency on account of my return to America. Dr. Lee succeeds me. I only keep it while I stay, which perhaps will be another winter.

I grieve to hear of the death of my good old friend Dr. Evans. I have lost so many since I left America that I begin to fear I shall find myself a stranger among strangers when I return. If so, I must come again to my friends in England. I am ever your affectionate father, B. FRANKLIN.

TO THE HON. THOMAS CUSHING, ESQ.

SIR, *London, Sept.* 12, 1773.

The above is a copy of my last per packet. Inclosed is the original letter therein mentioned. His Lordship continues in the country, but is expected (Secretary Pownall tells me) the beginning of next month.

To avoid repealing the American tea duty and yet find a vent for tea, a project is executing to send it from hence on account of the East India Company to be sold in America, agreeable to a late act impowering the Lords of the Treasury to grant licences to the Company to export tea thither under certain restrictions, duty free. Some friends of Government (as they are called) of Boston, New York, Philadelphia, &c. are to be favoured with the commission, who undertake by their interest to carry the measure through in the colonies. How the other merchants thus excluded from the tea trade will like this, I cannot foresee. Their agreement, if I remember right, was not to import tea, till the duty shall be repealed. Perhaps they will think themselves still obliged by that agreement notwithstanding this temporary expedient; which is only to introduce the tea for the present, and may be dropped next year, and the duty again required, the granting or refusing such licence from time to time remaining in the power of the treasury. And it will seem

hard, while their hands are tied, to see the profits of that article all engrossed by a few particulars.

Enclosed ' I take the liberty of sending you a small piece of mine, written to

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' A PRUSSIAN EDICT, &c.

Dantzic, September 5, 1773.

We have long wondered here at the supineness of the *English* nation, under the *Prussian* impositions upon its trade entering our port. We did not, till lately, know the claims, ancient and modern, that hang over that nation; and therefore could not suspect that it might submit to those impressions from a sense of duty, or from principles of equity. The following edict, just made public, may, if serious, throw some light upon this matter:

' FREDERICK, by the grace of God, King of Prussia, &c, &c. &c. to all present and to come health. The peace now enjoyed throughout Our dominions, having afforded us leisure to apply Ourselves to the regulation of commerce, the improvement of Our finances, and at the same time the easing Our *domestic* subjects in their taxes: for these causes, and other good considerations Us thereunto moving, We hereby make known, that, after having deliberated these affairs in Our council, present Our dear brothers, and other great officers of the state, members of the same; We, of Our certain knowledge, full power, and authority royal, have made and issued this present edict, viz.

' Whereas it is well known to all the world, that the first *German* settlements made in the island of Britain, were by colonies of people, subjects to Our renowned ducal ancestors, and drawn from their dominions, under the conduct of Hengist, Horsa, Hella, Uffa, Cerdicus, Ida, and others; And that the said colonies have flourished under the protection of Our august house, for ages past; have never been emancipated therefrom; and yet have hitherto yielded little profit to the same: And whereas We Ourself have in the last war fought for and defended the said colonies, against the power of France, and thereby enabled them to make conquests from the said power in America; for which We have not yet received adequate compensation: And whereas it is just and expedient that a revenue should be raised from the said colonies in Britain, towards Our indemnification; and that those who are descendants of Our ancient subjects, and thence still owe Us due obedience, should contribute to the replenishing of our royal coffers; (as they must have done, had their ancestors remained in the territories now to Us appertaining): We do therefore hereby ordain and command, That, from and after the date of these presents, there shall be levied, and paid to Our officers of the *customs*, on all goods, wares, and merchandizes, and on all grain and other produce of the earth, exported from the said island of Britain, and on all goods of whatever kind imported into the same; a duty of four and a half per cent. ad valorem, for the use of Us and Our successors. And that the said duty may more effectually be collected, We do hereby ordain, that all ships or vessels bound from Great Britain to any other part of the world, or from any other part of the world to Great Britain, shall in their respective voyages touch at Our port of Koningsberg, there to be unladen, searched, and charged with the said duties.

expose, in as striking a light as I could, to the nation, the absurdity of the measures towards America, and to spur the ministry if possible to a change of those measures.

'And whereas there hath been from time to time discovered in the said island of Great Britain, by Our colonists there, many mines or beds of *iron*-stone; and sundry subjects of Our ancient dominion, skilful in converting the said stone into metal, have in time past transported themselves thither, carrying with them and communicating that art; and the inhabitants of the said island, presuming that they had a natural right to make the best use they could of the natural productions of their country, for their own benefit, have not only built furnaces for smelting the said stone into iron, but have erected plating-forges, slitting-mills, and steel-furnaces, for the more convenient manufacturing of the same; thereby endangering a diminution of the said manufacture in Our ancient dominion; We do therefore hereby farther ordain, That, from and after the date hereof, no mill or other engine for slitting or rolling of iron, or any plating-forge to work with a tilt-hammer, or any furnace for making steel, shall be erected or continued in the said island of Great Britain: And the Lord Lieutenant of every county in the said island is hereby commanded, on information of any such erection within his county, to order, and by force to cause the same to be abated and destroyed; as he shall answer the neglect thereof to Us at his peril. But We are nevertheless graciously pleased to permit the inhabitants of the said island to transport their iron into Prussia, there to be manufactured, and to them returned; they paying Our Prussian subjects for the workmanship, with all the costs of commission, freight, and risk, coming and returning; any thing herein contained to the contrary notwithstanding.

We do not, however, think fit to extend this Our indulgence to the article of *wool;* but meaning to encourage not only the manufacturing of woollen cloth, but also the raising of wool, in Our ancient dominions; and to prevent both, as much as may be, in Our said island, We do hereby absolutely forbid the transportation of wool from thence even to the mother-country, Prussia;—And that those islanders may be farther and more effectually restrained in making any advantage of their own wool, in the way of manufacture, We command that none shall be carried out of one county into another; nor shall any worsted, bay, or woollen-yarn, cloth, says, bays, kerseys, serges, frizes, druggets, cloth-serges, shalloons, or any other drapery stuffs, or woollen manufactures whatsoever, made up or mixed with wool in any of the said counties, be carried into any other county, or be water-borne even across the smallest river or creek; on penalty of forfeiture of the same, together with the boats, carriages, horses, &c. that shall be employed in removing them. Nevertheless, Our loving subjects there are hereby permitted (if they think proper) to use all their wool as manure, for the improvement of their lands.

And whereas the art and mystery of making *hats* hath arrived at great perfection in Prussia; and the making of hats by Our remoter subjects ought to be as much as possible restrained: And forasmuch as the islanders before mentioned, being in possession of wool, beaver, and other furs, have presumptuously conceived they had a right to make some advantage thereof, by manufacturing the same into hats, to the prejudice of Our domestic manufacture:—We do therefore hereby strictly command and ordain, that no hats or felts whatsoever, dyed or undyed, finished or unfinished, shall be loaden or put into or upon any vessel, cart, carriage or horse; *to* be transported or conveyed out of one county in the said island into another county, or to any other place whatsoever, by any person or persons whatsoever;

Please to present my duty to the house, and respects to the Committee. I have the honour to be, with much esteem, Sir, your most obedient humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

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on pain of forfeiting the same, with a penalty of five hundred pounds sterling for every offence. Nor shall any hat-maker, in any of the said counties, employ more than two apprentices, on penalty of five pounds sterling per month: We intending hereby that such hat-makers, being so restrained, both in the production and sale of their commodity, may find no advantage in continuing their business. But, lest the said islanders should suffer inconveniency by the want of hats, We are farther graciously pleased to permit them to send their beaver furs to Prussia; and We also permit hats made thereof to be exported from Prussia to Britain; the people thus favoured to pay all costs and charges of manufacturing, interest, commission to Our merchants, insurance and freight going and returning; as in the case of iron.

And lastly, being willing farther to favour our said colonies in Britain, We do hereby also ordain and command, that all the *thieves*, highway and street robbers, housebreakers, forgerers, murderers, s—d—tes, and villains of every denomination, who have forfeited their lives to the law in Prussia; but whom We, in our great clemency, do not think fit here to hang; shall be emptied out of Our gaols into the said island of Great Britain, for the better peopling of that country.

We flatter ourselves that these Our royal regulations and commands will be thought *just and reasonable* by Our much-favoured colonists in England; the said regulations being copied from their statutes of 10 and 11 Will. III. c. 10.—5 Geo. II. c. 22.—23 Geo. II. c. 29.—4 Geo. I. c. 11. and from other equitable laws made by their parliaments; or from instructions given by their princes, or from resolutions of both houses, entered into for the good government of their *own colonies in Ireland and America.*

And all persons in the said island are hereby cautioned not to oppose in any wise the execution of this Our edict, or any part thereof, such opposition being high-treason; of which all who are suspected shall be transported in fetters from Britain to Prussia, there to be tried and executed according to the Prussian law.

Such is Our pleasure.

Given at Potsdam, this twenty-fifth day of the month of August, One thousand seven hundred and seventy-three, and in the thirty-third year of Our reign.

By the King, in his council,

RECHTMÆSSIG, Sec.'

Some take this edict to be merely one of the King's *Jeux d'Esprit:* others suppose it serious, and that he means a quarrel with England: but all here think the assertion it concludes with 'that these regulations are copied from acts of the *English* parliament respecting their colonies,' a very injurious one; it being impossible to believe, that a people distinguished for their love of liberty; a nation so wise, so liberal in its sentiments, so just and equitable towards its neighbours; should, from mean and injudicious views of petty immediate profit, treat its own children in a manner so arbitrary and tyrannical.

To Governor Franklin.

Dear Son, *London, Oct.* 6, 1773.

I wrote to you on the 1st of last month, since which I have received yours of July 29, from New York.

I know not what letters of mine Governor H. could mean, as advising the people to insist on their independency. But whatever they were, I suppose he has sent copies of them hither, having heard some whisperings about them. I shall, however, be able at any time to justify every thing I have written; the purport being uniformly this, that they should carefully avoid all tumults and every violent measure, and content themselves with verbally keeping up their claims, and holding forth their rights whenever occasion requires; secure, that from the growing importance of America, those claims will 'ere long be attended to and acknowledged. From a long and thorough consideration of the subject, I am indeed of opinion that the parliament has no right to make any law whatever binding on the colonies. That the King, and not the King, lords and commons collectively, is their sovereign; and that the King with their respective parliaments is their only legislator. I know your sentiments differ from mine on these subjects. You are a thorough government man, which I do not wonder at, nor do I aim at converting you. I only wish you to act uprightly and steadily, avoiding that duplicity which in Hutchinson adds contempt to indignation. If you can promote the prosperity of your people, and leave them happier than you found them, whatever your political principles are, your memory will be honoured.

I have written two pieces here lately for the Public Advertiser, on American affairs, designed to expose the conduct of this country towards the colonies, in a short, comprehensive, and striking view, and stated therefore in out-of-the-way forms, as most likely to take the general attention. The first was called Rules *by which a great empire may be reduced to a small one;* the second, *An Edict of the King of Prussia.* I sent you one of the first, but could not get enough of the second to spare you one, though my clerk went the next morning to the printer's, and wherever they were sold. They were all gone but two. In my own mind I preferred the first as a composition for the quantity and variety of the matter contained, and a kind of spirited ending of each paragraph. But I find that others here generally prefer the second. I am not suspected as the author except by one or two friends; and have heard the latter spoken of in the highest terms as the keenest and severest piece that has appeared here a long time. Lord Mansfield I hear said of it, that it *was very* ABLE *and very* ARTFUL indeed; and would do

mischief by giving here a bad impression of the measures of government, and in the colonies by encouraging them in their contumacy. It is reprinted in the Chronicle, where you will see it, but stripped of all the capitalling and italiking, that intimate the allusions and mark the emphasis of written discourses, to bring them as near as possible to those spoken: printing such a piece all in one even small character seems to me like repeating one of Whitfield's Sermons in the monotony of a school-boy. What made it the more noticed here was, that people in reading it, were, as the phrase is, *taken in*, till they had got half through it, and imagined it a real edict, to which mistake I suppose the King of Prussia's *character* must have contributed. I was down at Lord le Despencer's when the post brought that day's papers. Mr. Whitehead was there too (Paul Whitehead, the author of Manners) who runs early through all the papers, and tells the company what he finds remarkable. He had them in another room, and we were chatting in the breakfast parlour, when he came running into us, out of breath, with the paper in his hand. Here! says he, here's news for ye! *Here's the King of Prussia claiming a right to this kingdom!* All stared, and I as much as any body; and he went on to read it. When he had read two or three paragraphs, a gentleman present said, *Damn his impudence, I dare say, we shall hear by next post that he is upon his march with* 100,000 *men to back this.* Whitehead, who is very shrewd, soon after began to smoke it, and looking in my face said, *I'll be hanged if this is not some of your American jokes upon us.* The reading went on and ended with abundance of laughing, and a general verdict that it was a fair hit. And the piece was cut out of the paper and preserved in my Lord's collection.

I don't wonder that Hutchinson should be dejected. It must be an uncomfortable thing to live among people who he is conscious universally detest him. Yet I fancy he will not have leave to come home, both because they know not well what to do with him, and because they do not very well like his conduct. I am ever your affectionate father, B. FRANKLIN.

TO THE HON. THOMAS CUSHING, ESQ.

SIR, *London, Nov.* 1, 1773.

I duly received your favour of 26th August, with the letter inclosed for Lord Dartmouth, which I immediately sent to him. As soon as he comes to town I shall wait upon his Lordship and discourse with him upon the subject of it; and I shall immediately write to you what I can collect from the conversation.

In my own opinion the letter of the two houses of the 29th June, proposing as a satisfactory measure the restoring things to the state in which they were at the conclusion of the late war, is a fair and generous offer on our part, and my discourse here is, that it is more than Britain has a right to expect from us; and that if she has any wisdom left she will embrace it, and agree with us immediately; for that the longer she delays the accommodation which finally she must for her own sake obtain, the worse terms she may expect, since the inequality of power and importance that at present subsists between us is daily diminishing, and our sense of our own rights and of her injustice continually increasing. I am the more encouraged to hold such language, by perceiving that the general sense of the nation is for us; a conviction prevailing that we have been ill used, and that a breach with us would be ruinous to this country. The pieces I wrote to increase and strengthen those sentiments, were more read, and talked of, and attended to than usual. The first as you will see by the inclosed has been called for, and reprinted in the same paper, besides being copied in others, and in the Magazines. A long laboured answer has been made to it (by Governor Bernard it is said) which I send you. I am told it does not satisfy those in whose justification it was written, and that a better is preparing. I think with you that great difficulties must attend an attempt to make a new representation of our grievances, in which the point of right should be kept out of sight, especially as the concurrence of so many colonies seems now necessary. And therefore it would certainly be best and wisest for parliament (which does not meet till after the middle of January) to make up the matter themselves, and at once reduce things to the state desired. There are not wanting some here who believe this will really be the case; for, that a new election being now in view, the present members are likely to consider the composing all differences with America as a measure agreeable to the trading and manufacturing part of the nation; and that the neglecting it may be made use of by their opponents to their disadvantage.

I have as yet received no answer to the petition for removing the Governors. I imagine that it will hardly be complied with, as it would embarrass government to provide for them otherwise, and it will be thought hard to neglect men who have exposed themselves by adhering to what is here called the interest and rights of this country. But this I only conjecture, as I have heard nothing certain about it. Indeed I should think continuing them in their places would be rather a punishment than a favour. For what comfort can men have in living among a people with whom they are the object of universal odium.

I shall continue here one winter longer, and use my best endeavours as long as I stay for the service of our country. With great esteem, I have the honour to be, Sir, your most obedient humble servant, B. FRANKLIN.

To JOSEPH GALLOWAY, ESQ. PAILADELPHIA.

SIR, *London, Nov.* 3, 1773.

There is at present great quietness here, and no prospect that the war between the Turks and Russians will spread farther in Europe. The last harvest is allowed to have been generally plentiful in this country; and yet such was the preceding scantiness of crops, that it is thought there is no corn to spare for exportation, which continues the advantages to our corn provinces.

The parliament is not to meet till after the middle of January. It is said there is a disposition to compose all differences with America before the next general election, as the trading and manufacturing part of the nation are generally our well wishers, think we have been hardly used, and apprehend ill consequences from a continuance of the measures that we complain of: and that if those measures are not changed an American interest may be spirited up at the election against the present members who are in, or friends to administration. Our steady refusal to take tea from hence for several years past has made its impressions. The scheme for supplying us without repealing the act, by a temporary licence from the treasury to export tea to America free of duty, you are before this time acquainted with. I much want to hear how that tea is received. If it is rejected the act will undoubtedly be repealed, otherwise I suppose it will be continued, and when we have got into the use of the Company's tea, and the foreign correspondences that supply us at present are broken off, the licences will be discontinued, and the act enforced.

I apprehend the better understanding that lately subsisted in our provincial administration will hardly be continued with the new Governor; but you will soon see. I wish for the full letter you promise me by the next packet, which is now daily expected. With unalterable esteem and attachment, I am ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately, B. FRANKLIN.

To GOVERNOR FRANKLIN.

DEAR SON, *London, Nov.* 3, 1773.

I wrote you pretty fully by the last packet, and having had no line from you of later date than the beginning of August, and little stirring here lately, I have now little to write.

In that letter I mentioned my having written two papers, of which I preferred the first, but the public the last. It seems I was mistaken in judging of the public opinion; for the first was reprinted some weeks after in the same paper, the printer giving for reason that he did it in compliance with the earnest request of many private persons, and some respectable societies; which is the more extraordinary as it had been copied in several other papers and in the Gentleman's Magazine.[1] Such papers may seem to have a tendency to increase our divisions, but I intend a contrary effect, and hope by comprizing in little room and setting in a strong light the grievances of the colonies, more attention will be paid to them by our administration, and that when their unreasonableness is generally seen, some of them will be removed, to the restoration of harmony between us. B. FRANKLIN.

TO THE HON. THOMAS CUSHING, ESQ.

SIR, *London, Jan. 5, 1774.*

I received the honour of yours dated October 28 with the Journals of the house and Mr. Turner's Election Sermon.

I waited on Lord Dartmouth on his return to town, and learnt that he had presented to his majesty our petition for the removal of the governors. No subsequent step had yet been taken upon it: but his lordship said, the king would probably refer the consideration of it to a committee of council, and that I should have notice to be heard in support of it. By the turn of his conversation, though he was not explicit, I apprehend the petition is not likely to be complied with: but we shall see. His lordship expressed as usual much concern at the differences subsisting, and wished they would be accommodated. Perhaps his good wishes are all that is in his power.

The famous letters having unfortunately engaged Mr. Temple and Mr. Wheatley in a duel, which being interrupted would probably be renewed, I thought it incumbent on me to prevent as far as I could any farther mischief, by declaring publicly the part I had in the affair of those letters, and thereby at the same time to rescue Mr. Temple's character from an undeserved and groundless imputation, that bore hard upon his honour, viz. that of taking the letters from Mr. Wheatly, and in breach

[1] Preface by the British Editor [*Dr. Franklin*] to the votes and proceedings of the freeholders and other inhabitants of the town of Boston in town meeting assembled, according to law, (published by order of the town) &c. Boston printed: London reprinted and sold by J. Wilkie, St. Paul's Church Yard, 1773.

of confidence. I did this with the more pleasure as I believe him a sincere friend to our country. I am told by some that it was imprudent in me to avow the obtaining and sending those letters, for that administration will resent it. I have not much apprehension of this, but if it happens I must take the consequences. I only hope it will not affect any friend on your side the water, for I have never mentioned *to whom* they were transmitted.

A letter of mine to you, printed in one of the Boston papers has lately been reprinted here, to show, as the publisher expresses it, that I am "*one of the most determined enemies* of the welfare and prosperity of Great Britain." In the opinion of some, every one who wishes the good of the *whole empire*, may nevertheless be an enemy to *the welfare of Great Britain*, if he does not wish its good *exclusively* of every other *part*, and to see its welfare built on their servitude and wretchedness. Such an enemy I certainly am. But methinks 'tis wrong to print letters of mine at Boston which give occasion to these reflections.

I shall continue to do all I possibly can this winter towards an accommodation of our differences; but my hopes are small. Divine Providence first infatuates the power it designs to ruin.

With the great esteem and respect, I have the honour to be, Sir, your most obedient humble servant, B. FRANKLIN.

To GOVERNOR FRANKLIN.

DEAR SON, *London, Jan. 5*, 1774.

I received yours of October 29, and November 2. Your December packet is not yet arrived.

No insinuations of the kind you mention, concerning Mr. G——y have reached me, and if they had, it would have been without the least effect; as I have always had the strongest reliance on the steadiness of his friendship, and on the best grounds, the knowledge I have of his integrity, and the often repeated disinterested services he has rendered me. My return will interfere with nobody's interest or influence in public affairs as my intention is to decline all interest in them, and every active part, except where it can serve a friend, and to content myself with communicating the knowledge of them my situation may have furnished me with, and be content with giving my advice for the public benefit, where it may be asked, or where I shall think it may be attended to: for being now about entering my sixty ninth year, and having lived so great a part of my life to the public, it seems but

fair that I should be allowed to live the small remainder to myself and to my friends.

If the honourable office you mention will be agreeable to him, I heartily wish it him. I only hope that if offered to him, he will insist on its being not during pleasure but *quamdiu se bene gesserit.*

Our friend Temple, as you will see by the papers, has been engaged in a duel about an affair in which he had no concern. As the combat was interrupted and understood to be unfinished, I thought it incumbent on me to do what I could for preventing farther mischief, and so declared my having transmitted the letters in question. This has drawn some censure upon myself, but as I grow old, I grow less concerned about censure when I am satisfied that I act rightly, and I have the pleasure of having exculpated a friend who lay undeservedly under an imputation much to his dishonour.

I am now seriously preparing for my departure to America, I purpose sending my luggage, books, instruments &c. by All or Falconer, and take my passage to New York in one of the spring or summer packets partly for settling some business with the Post office there, and partly that I may see you on my way to Philadelphia, and learn thereby more perfectly the state of affairs there. Your affectionate father,

B. FRANKLIN.

TO THE PRINTER OF THE PUBLIC ADVERTISER.

SIR,

The inclosed paper was written just before Lord Hillsborough quitted the American department. An expectation then prevailing, from the good character of the noble lord who succeeded him, that the grievances of the colonies would under his administration be redressed, it was laid aside; but as not a single measure of his predecessor has since been even attempted to be changed, and on the contrary new ones have been continually added farther to exasperate, render them desperate, aad drive them if possible into open rebellion, it may not be amiss now to give it the public, as it shows in detail the rise and progress of those differences which are about to break the empire in pieces. I am Sir, yours &c.

A. P.

SIR,

It is a bad temper of mind that takes a delight in opposition,

and is ever ready to censure ministry in the gross, without discrimination. Charity should be willing to believe that we never had an administration so bad, but there might be some good and some wise men in it; and that even such is our case at present. The scripture saith, by their works shall ye know them. By their conduct then, in their respective departments, and not by their company or their party connections, should they be distinctly and separately judged.

One of the most serious affairs to this nation that has of late required the attention of government, is our misunderstanding with the colonies. They are in the department of Lord Hillsborough, and from a prevailing opinion of his abilities, have been left by the other ministers very much to his management. If then our American business has been conducted with prudence, to him chiefly will be due the reputation of it.

Soon after the late war, it became an object with the ministers of this country to draw a revenue from America. The first attempt was by a stamp act. It soon appeared that this step had not been well considered; that the rights, the ability, the opinions and temper of that great people had not been sufficiently attended to. They complained that the tax was *unnecessary*, because their assemblies had ever been ready to make voluntary grants to the crown in proportion to their abilities, when duly required so to do; and *unjust*, because they had no representative in the British parliament but had parliaments of their own, wherein their consent was *given* as it *ought to be*, in *grants* of their own money. I do not mean to enter into this question. The parliament repealed the act as inexpedient, but in another act asserted a right of taxing America. And in the following year laid duties on the manufactures of this country exported thither. On the repeal of the stamp act, the Americans had returned to their wonted good humour and commerce with Britain; but this new act for laying duties renewed their uneasiness. They were long since forbidden by the navigation act to purchase manufactures of any other nation, and supposing that act well enforced, they saw that by this indirect mode, it was in the power of Britain to burthen them as much as by any direct tax, unless they could lay aside the use of such manufactures as they had been accustomed to purchase from Britain, or make the same themselves.

In this situation were affairs when my Lord H. entered on the American administration. Much was expected from his supposed abilities, application, and knowledge of business in that department. The newspapers were filled with his panegyrics, and expectations raised perhaps inconveniently.

The Americans determined to petition their sovereign, praying his gracious

interposition in their favour with his parliament, that the imposition of these duties which they considered as an infringement of their rights, might be repealed. The assembly of the Massachusetts bay had voted that it should be proposed to the other colonies to concur in that measure. This, for what reason I do not easily conceive, gave great offence to his Lordship; and one of his first steps was to *prevent* these concurring petitions. To this end, he sent a mandate to that assembly (the parliament of that country) requiring them to RESCIND that vote and desist from the measure, threatening them with dissolution in case of disobedience. The governor communicated to them the instructions he received to that purpose. They refused to obey, and were dissolved! Similar orders were sent at the same time to the governors of the other colonies, to dissolve their respective parliaments if they presumed to accede to the Boston proposition of petitioning his majesty, and several of them were accordingly dissolved.

Bad ministers have ever been averse to the right subjects claim of petitioning and remonstrating to their sovereign: for through that channel the prince may be apprized of the mal-administration of his servants; they may sometimes be thereby brought into danger, at least such petitions afford a handle to their adversaries, whereby to give them trouble. But as the measure to be complained of was not his lordships, it is rather extraordinary that he should thus set his face against the intended complaints. In his angry letters to America, he called the proposal of these petitions "a measure of most *dangerous* and *factious* tendency, calculated to enflame the minds of his majesty's subjects in the colonies, to promote an *unwarrantable combination*, and to excite and encourage an *open opposition* to and denial *of the authority of the parliament*, and, *to subvert the true spirit of the constitution*; and directed the governors immediately on the receipt of these orders, to exert their utmost influence to defeat this FLAGITIOUS attempt.

Without entering into the particular motives to this piece of his lordship's conduct, let us consider a little the wisdom of it. When subjects conceive themselves oppressed or injured, laying their complaints before the sovereign or the governing powers, is a kind of vent to griefs that gives some ease to their minds; the receiving with at least an *appearance* of regard their petitions, and taking them into consideration, gives present hope, and affords time for the cooling of resentment; so that even the refusal when decently expressed and accompanied with reasons, is made less unpleasant by the manner, is half approved, and the rest submitted to with patience. But when this vent to popular discontents is denied, and the subjects are thereby driven to desperation, infinite mischiefs follow. Many princes have lost

part, and some the whole of their dominions, and some their lives by this very conduct of their servants. The secretary for America therefore seems in this instance not to have judged rightly for the service of his excellent master.

But supposing the measure of discouraging and *preventing* petitions a right one, were the means of effecting this end judiciously chosen? I mean, the threatening with *dissolution* and the actual dissolving of the American parliaments. His lordship probably took up the idea from what he knows of the state of things in England and Ireland, where to be rechosen upon a dissolution often gives a candidate great trouble, and sometimes costs him a great deal of money. A dissolution may therefore be both fine and punishment to the members, if they desire to be again returned. But in most of the colonies there is no such thing as standing candidate for election. There is neither treating nor bribing. No man even expresses the least inclination to be chosen. Instead of humble advertisements intreating votes and interest, you see before every new election, requests of former members, acknowledging the honour done them by preceding elections, but setting forth their long service and attendance on the public business in that station, and praying that in consideration thereof some other person may be chosen in their room. Where this is the case, where the same representatives may be and generally are after a dissolution chosen without asking a vote or giving even a glass of cyder to an elector, is it likely that such a threat could contribute in the least to answer the end proposed. The experience of former governors, might have instructed his lordship that this was a vain expedient. Several of them, misled by their English ideas, had tried this practice to make assemblies submissive to their measures, but never with success. By the influence of his power in granting offices, a governor naturally has a number of friends in an assembly; these, if suffered to continue, though a minority, might frequently serve his purposes, by promoting what he wishes, or obstructing what he dislikes. But, if to punish the majority, he in a pet dissolves the house, and orders a new election, he is sure not to see a single friend in the new assembly. The people are put into an ill humour by the trouble given them, they resent the dissolution as an affront, and leave out every man suspected of having the least regard for the governor. This was the very effect of my lord's dissolutions in America, and the new assemblies were all found more untractable than the old ones.

But besides the imprudence of this measure, was it constitutional? The crown has doubtless the prerogative of dissolving parliaments, a prerogative lodged in its hands for the public good, which may in various instances require the use of it.

But should a king of Great Britain demand of his parliament the rescission of any vote they had passed or forbid them to petition the throne, *on pain of dissolution*, and actually dissolve them accordingly, I humbly conceive the minister who advised it would run some hazard of censure at least, for thus using the prerogative to the violation of *common right*, and breach of the constitution. The American assembly have no means of impeaching such a minister; but there is an assembly, the parliament of England, that have that power, and in a former instance exercised it well, by impeaching a great man (Lord Clarendon) for having (though in one instance only) *endeavoured to introduce arbitrary government into the colonies.*

The effect this operation of the American secretary had in America, was not a prevention of those petitions as he intended, but a despair in the people of any success from them, since they could not pass to the throne but through the hands of one who showed himself so extremely averse to the existence of them. Thence arose the design of interesting the British merchants and manufacturers in the event of their petitions, by agreements not to import goods from Great Britain till their grievances were redressed. Universal resentment occasioned these agreements to be more generally entered into, and the sending troops to Boston who daily insulted the assembly[1] and townsmen, instead of terrifying into a compliance with his measures, served only to exasperate and sour the minds of people throughout the continent, make frugality fashionable when the consumption of British goods was the question, and determine the inhabitants to exert every nerve in establishing manufactures among themselves.

Boston having grievously offended his lordship, by the refractory spirit they had shown in re-chusing those representatives, whom he esteemed the leaders of the opposition there, he resolved to punish that town by removing the assembly from thence to Cambridge, a country place about four miles distant. Here too his lordship's English and Irish ideas seem to have misled him. Removing a parliament from London or Dublin, where so many of the inhabitants are supported by the expence of such a number of wealthy lords and commoners, and have a dependance on that support, may be a considerable prejudice to a city deprived of such advantage; but the removal of the assembly, consisting of frugal honest farmers, from Boston could only affect the interest of a few poor widows who keep lodging houses

[1] They mounted a numerous guard daily round the parliament house, with drums beating and fifes playing while the members were in their debates, and had cannon planted and pointed at the building.

there. Whatever manufactures the members might want, were still purchased at Boston. They themselves, indeed suffered some inconvenience, in being perhaps less commodiously lodged, and being at a distance from the records; but this and the keeping them before so long prorogued, when the public affairs required their meeting, could never reconcile them to ministerial measures, it could serve only to put them more out of humour with Britain and its government so wantonly exercised, and to so little purpose. Ignorance alone of the true state of that country, can excuse (if it may be excused) these frivolous proceedings.

To have *good ends* in view and to use *proper means* to obtain them, shews the minister to be both *good* and *wise*. To pursue *good ends* by *improper means*, argues him, though *good*, to be but *weak*. To pursue *bad ends* by *artful means*, shows him to be *wicked* though *able*. But when his *ends* are *bad* and the means he uses *improper* to obtain these ends, what shall we say of such a minister? Every step taken for some time past in our treatment of America, the suspending their legislative powers, for not making laws *by direction* from hence; the countenancing their adversaries by rewards and pensions paid out of the revenues extorted from them by laws to which they have not given their assent; the sending over a set of rash indiscreet commissioners to collect that revenue, who by insolence of behaviour, harassing commerce, and perpetually accusing the good people (out of whose substance they are supported) to government here, as rebels and traitors, have made themselves universally odious there, but here are caressed and encouraged; together with the arbitrary dissolution of assemblies, and the quartering troops among the people, to menace and insult them; all these steps if intended to provoke them to rebellion that we might take their lives and confiscate their estates, are proper means to obtain a bad end: but if they are intended to conciliate the Americans to our government, restore our commerce with them, and secure the friendship and assistance which their growing strength, wealth and power may in a few years render extremely valuable to us, can any thing be conceived more injudicious, more absurd! His lordship may have in general a good understanding, his friends say he has; but in the political part of it, there must surely be some *twist*, some extreme *obliquity*.

A well wisher to the King and all his dominions.

TO THE PRINTER OF THE PUBLIC ADVERTISER.

SIR,

Your Correspondent Britannicus inveighs violently against

Dr. Franklin for his ingratitude to the ministry of this nation, who have conferred upon him so many favours. They gave him the Post Office of America; they made his Son a Governor; and they offered him a post of five hundred a year in the Salt Office, if he would relinquish the interests of his country; but he has had the wickedness to continue true to it, and is as much an American as ever. As it is a settled point in government here, that every man has his price, 'tis plain they are bunglers in their business, and have not given him enough. Their master has as much reason to be angry with them as Rodrigue in the play, with his Apothecary, for not effectually poisoning Pandolpho, and they must probably make use of the Apothecary's justification, viz.

SCENE IV.

Rodrigue and *Fell* the Apothecary.

Rodrigue. You promised to have this Pandolpho upon his bier in less than a week; 'tis more than a month since, and he still walks and stares me in the face.

Fell. True; and yet I have done my best endeavours. In various ways I have given the miscreant as much poison as would have killed an elephant. He has swallowed dose after dose;—far from hurting him, he seems the better for it. He hath a wonderfully strong constitution. I find I cannot kill him but by cutting his throat, and that, as I take it, is not my business.

Rodrigue. Then it must be mine.

TO THE PRINTER OF THE PUBLIC ADVERTISER.

SIR,

Nothing can equal the present rage of our ministerial writers against our brethren in America, who have the misfortune to be *whigs* in a reign when *whiggism* is out of fashion, who are besides Protestant dissenters and lovers of liberty. One may easily see from what quarter comes the abuse of those people in the papers; their struggle for their rights is called REBELLION, and the people REBELS; while those who really rebelled in Scotland (1745) for the expulsion of the present reigning family, and the establishment of popery and arbitrary power on the ruins of liberty and protestantism, who entered England and marched on as far as Derby, to the astonishment of this great city, and shaking the public credit of the nation; have now all their sins forgiven on account of their modish principles, and are called not *rebels*, but by the softer appellation of *insurgents!* These angry writers use their utmost efforts to persuade us that this war with the colonies (for a war it will be) is a national cause, when in fact it is merely a minis-

terial one. Administration wants an American revenue to dissipate in corruption. The quarrel is about a paltry three penny duty on tea. There is no real clashing of interests between Britain and America. Their commerce is to their mutual advantage, or rather most to the advantage of Britain, which finds a vast market in America for its manufactures; and *as good pay*, I speak from knowledge, as in any country she trades to upon the face of the globe. But the fact needs not my testimony, it speaks for itself, for if we could elsewhere get better pay and better prices, we should not send our goods to America.

The gross calumniators of that people, who want us to imbrue our hands in brothers' blood, have the effrontery to tell the world that the Americans associated in resolutions not to pay us what they owed us unless we repealed the Stamp act. This is an INFAMOUS FALSEHOOD; they know it to be such. I call upon the incendiaries who have advanced it, to produce their proofs. Let them name any two that entered into such an association, or any one that made such a declaration. Absurdity marks the very face of this lie. Every one acquainted with trade knows, that a credited merchant daring to be concerned in such an association, could never expect to be trusted again. His character on the Exchange of London would be ruined for ever. The great credit given them since that time, nay the present debt due from them, is itself a proof of the confidence we have in their probity. Another villainous falsehood advanced against the Americans is, that though we have been at such expence in protecting them they refuse to contribute their part to the public general expence of the empire. The fact is, that *they never did refuse a requisition of that kind.* A writer who calls himself *Sagittarius* (I suppose from his flinging about, like Solomon's fool, firebrands, *arrows*, and death) in the Ledger of March 9th asserts that the "Experiment has been tried, and that they did not think it expedient to return even an answer." How does he prove this? Why, "the colony agents were told by Mr. Grenville, that a revenue *would be* required from them to defray the expences of their protection." But was the requisition ever made? Were circular letters ever sent by his Majesty's command from the Secretary of State to the several colony governments according to the established custom, stating the occasion and requiring such supplies as were suitable to their abilities and loyalty? And did they then refuse not only compliance but an answer? No such matter, agents are not the channel through which requisitions are made. If they were told by Mr. Grenville that a "revenue *would be* required, and yet the colonies made no offer, no grant, nor laid any tax," does it follow they would not have done it if they had been required? Probably they thought it time enough when the *requisition*

should come, and in fact it never appeared there to this day. In the last war they all gave so liberally, that we thought ourselves bound in honour to return them a million. But we are disgusted with their free gifts; we want to have something that is obtained by force, like a mad landlord who should refuse the willing payment of his full rents, and chuse to take less by way of robbery.

This shameless writer would cajole the people of England with the fancy of their being Kings of America, and that their honour is at stake by the Americans disputing *their* government. He thrusts us into the throne cheek-by-jole with Majesty, and would have us talk as he writes, of *our* subjects in America, and *our sovereignty* over America: forgetting that the Americans, are subjects of the King, not *our* subjects, but our *fellow subjects*; and that they have parliaments of their own, with the right of granting their own money by their own representatives, which we cannot deprive them of but by violence and injustice.

Having by a series of iniquitous and irritating measures provoked a loyal people almost to desperation, we now magnify every act of an American mob into REBELLION, though the government there disapprove it and order prosecution, as is now the case with regard to the tea destroyed.—And we talk of nothing but troops and fleets, and force, of blocking up ports, destroying fisheries, abolishing charters, &c. &c. Here mobs of English sawyers can burn saw mills; mobs of English labourers destroy or plunder magazines of corn; mobs of English coal-heavers attack houses with fire arms; English smugglers can fight regularly the King's cruising vessels, drive them ashore and burn them, as lately on the coast of Wales, and on the coast of Cornwall; but upon these accounts we hear no talk of England's being in *rebellion;* no threats of taking away its Magna Charta, or repealing its Bill of Rights: for we well know that the operations of a mob are often unexpected, sudden and soon over, so that the civil power can seldom prevent or suppress them, not being able to come in before they have dispersed themselves: and therefore it is not always accountable for their mischiefs.

Surely the great commerce of this nation with the Americans is of too much importance to be risked in a quarrel which has no foundation but ministerial pique and obstinacy!

To us in the way of trade comes now, and has long come, all the super lucration arising from their labours. But will our reviling them as cheats, hypocrites, scoundrels, traitors, cowards, tyrants, &c. &c. according to the present court mode in all our papers, make them more our friends, more fond of our merchandize? Did ever any tradesman succeed who attempted to drub customers into his shop? And

will honest JOHN BULL the farmer be long satisfied with servants that before his face attempt to kill his *plough horses?*

(Signed) A Londoner. (by B. F.)

To DR. PRICE.

DEAR SIR, *Philadelphia, Oct.* 3, 1775.

I wish as ardently as you can do for peace, and should rejoice exceedingly in co-operating with you to that end. But every ship from Britain brings some intelligence of new measures that tend more and more to exasperate, and it seems to me that, until you have found by dear experience the reducing us by force impracticable, you will think of nothing fair and reasonable.

We have as yet resolved only on defensive measures. If you would recall your forces and stay at home, we should meditate nothing to injure you. A little time so given for cooling on both sides would have excellent effects. But you will goad and provoke us. You despise us too much—and you are insensible of the Italian adage, that there is no *little enemy.* I am persuaded that the body of the British people are our friends, but they are changeable, and by your lying gazettes may soon be made our enemies. Our respect for them will proportionably diminish, and I see clearly we are on the high road to mutual family hatred and detestation. A separation of course will be inevitable: 'Tis a million of pities so fair a plan as we have hitherto been engaged in for increasing strength and empire with public felicity should be destroyed by the mangling hands of a few blundering ministers. It will not be destroyed; God will protect and prosper it, you will only exclude yourselves from any share in it. We hear that more ships and troops are coming out. We know that you may do us a great deal of mischief, but we are determined to bear it patiently as long as we can. But if you flatter yourselves with beating us into submission, you know neither the people nor the country. The Congress is still sitting, and will wait the result of their *last* petition. Yours, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

To DR. COOPER.

MY DEAR FRIEND, *Passy, April* 22, 1779.

I received your valuable letter by the Marquis de la Fayette; and another by Mr. Bradford. I can now only write a few words in answer to the latter, the former not being at hand. The depreciation of our money, must, as you observe, greatly affect salary men, widows, and orphans. Methinks this evil

deserves the attention of the several legislatures, and ought if possible to be remedied by some equitable law, particularly adapted to their circumstances. I took all the pains I could in Congress to prevent the depreciation, by proposing first that the bills should bear interest: this was rejected, and they were struck as you see them. Secondly, after the first emission I proposed that we should stop, strike no more, but borrow on interest those we had issued. This was not then approved of, and more bills were issued. When from the too great quantity they began to depreciate, we agreed to borrow on interest, and I proposed that in order to fix the value of the principal, the interest should be promised in hard dollars. This was objected to as impracticable: but I still continue of opinion, that by sending out cargoes to purchase it we might have brought in money sufficient for that purpose, as we brought in powder, &c. &c. And that though the attempt must have been attended with a disadvantage, the loss would have been a less mischief than any measure attending the discredit of the bills, which threatens to take out of our hands the great instrument of our defence. The Congress did at last come into the proposal of paying the interest in real money. But when the whole mass of the currency was *under way* in depreciation, the momentum of its descent was too great to be stopt by a power that might at first have been sufficient to prevent the beginning of the motion. The *only remedy* now seems to be a diminution of the quantity by a vigorous taxation, of great *nominal* sums, which the people are more able to pay in proportion to the quantity and diminished value; and the *only consolation* under the evil is that the public debt is proportionably diminished with the depreciation: and this by a kind of imperceptible tax, every one having paid a part of it in the fall of value that took place between the receiving and paying such sums as passed through his hands. For it should always be remembered, that the original intention was to sink the bills by taxes, which would as effectually extinguish the debt as an actual redemption. This effect of paper currency is not understood on this side the water. And indeed the whole is a mystery even to the politicians, how we have been able to continue a war four years without money, and how we could pay with paper that had no previously fixed fund appropriated specifically to redeem it. This currency as we manage it is a wonderful machine. It performs its office when we issue it; it pays and clothes troops, and provides victuals and ammunition; and when we are obliged to issue a quantity excessive, it pays itself off by depreciation.

Our affairs in general stand in a fair light throughout Europe. Our cause is universally approved. Our constitutions of government have been translated and

printed in most languages, and are so much admired for the spirit of liberty that reigns in them, that it is generally agreed we shall have a vast accession of national property after the war, from every part of this Continent, and particularly from the British islands. We have only to persevere and to be happy. Yours, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO THE HON. JOSIAH QUINCY, ESQ.

DEAR SIR, *Passy, April 22*, 1779.

I received your very kind letter by Mr. Bradford, who appears a very sensible and amiable young gentleman, to whom I should with pleasure render any service here, upon your much respected recommendation; but I understand he returns immediately.

It is with great sincerity I join you in acknowledging and admiring the dispensations of Providence in our favour. America has only to be thankful and persevere. God will finish his work, and establish their freedom: and the lovers of liberty will flock from all parts of Europe with their fortunes to participate with us of that freedom—as soon as the peace is restored.

I am exceedingly pleased with your account of the French politeness and civility, as it appeared among the officers and people of their fleet. They have certainly advanced in those respects many degrees beyond the English. I find them here a most amiable nation to live with. The Spaniards are by common opinion supposed to be cruel, the English proud, the Scotch insolent, the Dutch avaricious, &c. but I think the French have no national vice ascribed to them. They have some frivolities, but they are harmless. To dress their heads so that a hat cannot be put on them, and then wear their hats under their arms, and to fill their noses with tobacco, may be called follies perhaps, but they are not vices, they are only the effects of the tyranny of custom. In short there is nothing wanting in the character of a Frenchman that belongs to that of an agreeable and worthy man. They have only some trifles, a surplus of which might be spared.

Will you permit me, while I do them this justice, to hint a little censure on our own country people? which I do in good-will, wishing the cause removed. You know the necessity we are under of supplies from Europe, and the difficulty we have at present in making returns. The interest bills would do a good deal towards purchasing arms, ammunition, cloathing, sailcloth, and other necessaries for defence. Upon enquiry of those who present those bills to me for acceptance, what the money is to be laid out in, I find that most of it is for superfluities, and more than half of

it for tea! How unhappily in this instance the folly of our people, and the avidity of our merchants, concur to weaken and impoverish our country! I formerly computed that we consumed before the war, in that single article, the value of 500,000*l.* sterling annually. Much of this was saved by stopping the use of it. I honoured the virtuous resolution of our women in foregoing that little gratification, and I lament that such virtue should be of so short duration! Five hundred thousand pounds sterling annually laid out in defending ourselves or annoying our enemies would have great effects. With what face can we ask aids and subsidies from our friends while we are wasting our own wealth in such prodigality? With great and sincere esteem, I am, &c. B. FRANKLIN.

TO THE MARQUIS DE LA FAYETTE.

DEAR SIR, *Passy, August* 19, 1779.

I have just now received your favour of the 17th. I wrote to you a day or two ago, and have little to add. You ask my opinion what conduct the English will probably hold on this occasion, and whether they will not rather propose a negociation for a peace: I have but one rule to go by in judging of those people, which is, that whatever is prudent for them to do they will omit; and what is most imprudent to be done, they will do it. This like other general rules, may sometimes have its exceptions; but I think it will hold good for the most part, at least while the present ministry continues, or rather while the present *madman* has the choice of ministers. You desire to know whether I am satisfied with the ministers here? It is impossible for any body to be more so. I see they exert themselves greatly in the common cause, and do every thing for us they can. We can wish for nothing more, unless our great want of money should make us wish for a subsidy, to enable us to act more vigorously in expelling the enemy from their remaining posts, and reducing Canada. But their own expences are so great, that I cannot press such an addition to it. I hope however that we shall get some supplies of arms and ammunition; and perhaps when they can be spared, some ships to aid in reducing New York and Rhode Island. At present I know of no good opportunity of writing to America. There are merchant ships continually going, but they are very uncertain conveyances. I long to hear of your safe arrival in England: but the winds are adverse, and we must have patience. With the sincerest esteem and respect, I am, ever &c. B. FRANKLIN.

To the Marquis de la Fayette.

(With the Sword ordered by Congress).

Sir, *Passy, Aug. 24, 1779.*

The Congress, sensible of your merit towards the United States, but unable adequately to reward it, determined to present you with a Sword, as a small mark of their grateful acknowledgment. They directed it to be ornamented with suitable devices. Some of the principal actions of the war in which you distinguished yourself by your bravery and conduct, are therefore represented upon it. These with a few emblematic figures all admirably well executed make its principal value. By the help of the exquisite artists France affords, I find it easy to express every thing but the sense we have of your worth and our obligations to you. For this, figures and even words are found insufficient. I therefore only add, that with the most perfect esteem and respect, I have the honour to be, &c.

B. Franklin.

P. S. My Grandson goes to Havre with the sword, and will have the honour of presenting it to you.

To Dr. Cooper.

Dear Sir, *Passy, Oct. 27, 1779.*

It is a long time since I have had the pleasure of hearing from you. The intelligence you were used to favour me with, was often useful to our affairs. I hope I have not lost your friendship together with your correspondence. Our excellent Mr. Winthrop, I see, is gone. He was one of those old friends for the sake of whose society I wished to return and spend the small remnant of my days in New England. A few more such deaths will make me a stranger in my own country. The loss of friends is the tax a man pays for living long himself. I find it a heavy one.

You will see by the newspapers that we have given some disturbance to the British coasts this year. One little privateer out of Dunkerque, the Black Prince, with a Congress commission, and a few Americans mixed with Irish and English smugglers, went round their islands and took 57 prizes in less than three months. The little squadron of Commodore Jones, under the same commissions and colours, has alarmed those coasts exceedingly, occasioned a good deal of internal expence, done great damage to their trade, and taken two frigates, with 400 prisoners. He is now with his principal prizes in Holland, where he is pretty well received, but must quit that neutral country as soon as his damages are repaired. The English

watch with a superior force, his coming out, but we hope he will manage so as to escape their vigilance. Few actions at sea have demonstrated such steady, cool determined bravery as that of Jones in taking the Seraphis.

There has been much rumour this summer throughout Europe, of an approaching peace, through the mediation of Russia and Holland: but it is understood to arise from the invention of stock-jobbers and others interested in propagating such opinions. England seems not to be yet sufficiently humbled, to acknowledge the independence of the American States, or to treat with them on that footing, and our friends will not make a peace on any other. So we shall probably see another campaign.

By the invoices I have seen and heard of, sent hither with Congress Interest Bills of Exchange to purchase the goods, it should seem that there is not so great a want of necessaries as of superfluities among our people. It is difficult to conceive that your distresses can be great, when one sees that much the greatest part of that money is lavished in modes, gewgaws, and tea! Is it impossible for us to become wiser, when by simple economy and avoiding unnecessary expences we might more than defray the charge of the war. We export solid provision of all kinds which is necessary for the sustenance of man, and we import fashions, luxuries, and trifles. Such trade may enrich the traders, but never the country.

The good will of all Europe to our cause, as being the cause of liberty, which is the cause of mankind, still continues, as does the universal wish to see the English pride humiliated, and their power curtailed. Those circumstances are encouraging, and give hopes of a happy issue. Which may God grant, and that you my friend, may live long a blessing to your country. I am, &c. B. FRANKLIN.

TO THE REV. DR. COOPER.

DEAR SIR, *Passy, May 25, 1781.*

It gives me great pleasure to learn that your new constitution is at length settled with so great a degree of unanimity and general satisfaction. It seems to me upon the whole an excellent one; and that if there are some particulars that one might have wished a little different, they are such as could not in the present state of things have been well obtained otherwise than they are, and if by experience found inconvenient, will probably be changed hereafter. I would only mention at present one article, that of maintenance for the clergy. It seems to me that by the constitution the Quakers may be obliged to pay the tax for that purpose. But as the great end in imposing it is professedly the promotion of piety,

religion, and morality, and those people have found means of securing that end among themselves without a regular clergy, and their teachers are not allowed to receive money; I should think it not right to tax them and give the money to the teacher of the parish; but I imagine that in the laws to be made for levying parish taxes, this matter may be regulated to their contentment. Yours, &c. B. F.

To the Hon. Robert Morris, Esq.
Superintendant of the Finances of the United States.

Dear Sir, *Passy, July* 26, 1781.

I have just received your very friendly letter of the 6th of June past, announcing your appointment to the superintendance of our finances. This gave me great pleasure, as from your intelligence, integrity, and abilities, there is reason to hope every advantage the public can possibly receive from such an office. You are wise in estimating before hand, as the principal advantage you can expect, the consciousness of having done service to your country. For the business you have undertaken is of so complex a nature, and must engross so much of your time and attention as necessarily to hurt your private interests; and the public is often niggardly even of its thanks, resembling those little dirty stinking insects, that attack us only in the dark, disturb our repose, molesting and wounding us while our sweat and blood is contributing to their subsistence. Every assistance that my situation here, as long as it continues, may enable me to afford you, shall certainly be given. For besides my affection for the glorious cause we are both engaged in, I value myself upon your friendship, and shall be happy if mine can be made of any use to you. With great and sincere esteem, I am ever, dear Sir, &c. &c. B. Franklin.

P. S. With this I shall send an answer to your official letter of June 8.

To Sir Edward Newenham, Bart. Ireland.

Dear Sir, *Passy, Oct.* 2, 1783.

I have just received your very kind letter of the 16th past. I rejoice sincerely to hear of your safe return to your own country, family and friends, and of the success of your election.

It is a pleasing reflection arising from the contemplation of our successful struggle and the manly, spirited, and unanimous resolves at Dungannon, that liberty, which some years since appeared in danger of extinction, is now regaining the ground she

had lost, that arbitrary governments are likely to become more mild, and reasonable, and to expire by degrees, giving place to more equitable forms; one of the effects this of the art of printing which diffuses so general a light, augmenting with the growing day, and of so penetrating a nature, that all the window shutters despotism and priestcraft can oppose to keep it out, prove insufficient.

In answer to your question respecting what may be necessary to fix a trade between Ireland and America, I may acquaint you between ourselves, that there is some truth in the report you may have heard, of our desiring to know of Mr. Hartley whether he was empowered or instructed to include Ireland in the treaty of commerce proposed to us, and of his sending for instructions on that head, which never arrived. That treaty is yet open, may possibly be soon resumed, and it seems proper that something should be contained in it to prevent the doubts and misunderstandings that may hereafter arise on the subject, and secure to Ireland the same advantages in trade that England may obtain. You can best judge whether some law or resolution of your parliament may not be of use towards gaining that point.

My grandson joins me in wishes of every kind of felicity for you, Lady Newenham and all your amiable family. God bless you and give success to your constant endeavours for the welfare of your country. With true and great respect and esteem, I have the honour to be &c. B. FRANKLIN.

To B. VAUGHAN Esq.

DEAR SIR, *Passy, March* 1784.

You mention that I may now see verified all you said about binding down England to so hard a peace. I suppose you do not mean by the American treaty; for we were exceeding favourable in not insisting on the reparations so justly due for the wanton burnings of our fine towns and devastations of our plantations in a war now universally allowed to have been originally unjust. I may add that you will also see verified all I said about the article respecting the royalists, that it will occasion more mischief than it was intended to remedy, and that it would have been better to have omitted all mention of them. England might have rewarded them according to their merits at no very great expence. After the harms they had done to us, it was imprudent to insist on our doing them good.

I am sorry for the overturn you mention of those beneficial systems of commerce

that would have been exemplary to mankind. The making England entirely a free port would have been the wisest step ever taken for its advantage.

I wish much to see what you say a respectable friend of mine has undertaken to write respecting the peace. It is a pity it has been delayed. If it had appeared earlier it might have prevented much mischief, by securing our friends in their situations; for we know not who will succeed them, nor what credit they will hold.

By my doubts of the propriety of my going soon to London, I meant no reflection on my friends or yours. If I had any call there besides the pleasure of seeing those I love, I should have no doubts. If I live to arrive there I shall certainly embrace your kind invitation, and take up my abode with you. Make my compliments and respects acceptable to Mrs. Vaughan.

I know not what foundation there can be for saying that I abuse England as much as before the peace. I am not apt, I think, to be abusive: of the two I had rather be abused.

Inclosed are the letters you desire. I wish to hear from you more frequently, and to have through you such new pamphlets as you may think worth my reading. I am ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately, B. FRANKLIN.

To DAVID HARTLEY, ESQ.

MY DEAR FRIEND, *Passy, Jan.* 7, 1784.

I have this moment received your favour of the 25th past, acquainting me with the change in administration. I am not sure that in reforming the constitution, which is sometimes talked of, it would not be better to make your great officers of state hereditary than to suffer the inconvenience of such frequent and total changes. Much faction and cabal would be prevented by having an hereditary first Lord of the Treasury, an hereditary Lord Chancellor, Privy Seal, President of Council, Secretary of State, first Lord of the Admiralty &c. &c. It will not be said that the duties of these offices being important, we cannot trust to nature for the chance of requisite talents, since we have an hereditary set of judges in the last resort, the House of Peers; an hereditary King; and in a certain German University, an hereditary professor of Mathematics.

We have not yet heard of the arrival of our express in America, who carried the definitive treaty. He sailed the 26th of September. As soon as the ratification arrives, I shall immediately send you word of it.

With great esteem I am ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

To the Hon. John Jay New York.

Dear Sir, *Passy, Feb.* 8, 1785.

I received by the Marquis de la Fayette your kind letter of the 13th of December. It gave me pleasure on two other accounts, as it informed me of the public welfare, and that of your, I may almost say *our* dear little family; for since I had the pleasure of their being with me in the same house, I have ever felt a tender affection for them, equal I believe to that of most fathers. I did hope to have heard by the last packet of your having accepted the secretaryship of foreign affairs, but was disappointed. I write to you now therefore only as a private friend; yet I may mention respecting public affairs, that as far as I can perceive, the good disposition of this court towards us continues. I wish I could say as much for the rest of the European courts. I think that their desire of being connected with us by treaties is of late much abated; and this I suppose occasioned by the pains Britain takes to represent us every where as distracted with divisions, discontented with our governments, the people unwilling to pay taxes, the congress unable to collect them, and many desiring the restoration of the old government. The English papers are full of this stuff, and their ministers get it copied into the foreign papers. The moving about of the congress from place to place, has also a bad effect, in giving colour to the reports of their being afraid of the people. I hope they will soon settle some where, and by the steadiness and wisdom of their measures dissipate all those mists of misrepresentation raised by the remaining malice of ancient enemies, and establish our reputation for national justice and prudence as they have done for courage and perseverance.

It grieves me that we have not been able to discharge our first year's payment of interest to this court, due the beginning of last month. I hope it will be the only failure, and that effectual measures will be taken to be exactly punctual hereafter. *The good paymaster*, says the proverb, *is lord of another man's purse.* The bad one if he ever has again occasion to borrow, must pay dearly for his carelessness and injustice.

You are happy in having got back safe to your country. I should be less unhappy, if I could imagine the delay of my *congé* useful to the states, or in the least degree necessary. But they have many equally capable of doing all I have to do here. The new proposed treaties are the most important things; but two can go through them as well as three, if indeed any are likely to be completed which I begin to doubt, since the new ones make little progress, and the old ones which

wanted only the fiat of congress seem now to be rather going backward; I mean those I had projected with Denmark and Portugal.

My grandsons are sensible of the honour of your remembrance and present their respects to you and Mrs. Jay. I add my best wishes of health and happiness to you all, being with sincere esteem and affection, dear Sir, your most obedient humble servant, B. FRANKLIN.

To MR. SMALL.

DEAR SIR, *Philadelphia, Sept.* 28, 1787.

I received your kind letter of June 6, 86, and I answered it, though long after the receipt. I do not perceive by your second favour of July 87, that my answer had then come to hand, but hope it may since that time.

I have not lost any of the principles of public economy you once knew me possessed of; but to get the bad customs of a country changed, and new ones, though better, introduced, it is necessary first to remove the prejudices of the people, enlighten their ignorance, and convince them that their interest will be promoted by the proposed changes: and this is not the work of a day. Our legislators are all land holders; and they are not yet persuaded that all taxes are finally paid by the land. Besides our country is so sparely settled, the habitations particularly in the back countries, being perhaps five or six miles distant from each other, that the time and labour of the collector in going from house to house, and being obliged to call often before he can recover the tax, amounts to more than the tax is worth, and therefore we have been forced into the mode of indirect taxes i. e. duties on importation of goods, and excises.

I have made no attempt to introduce the form of prayer here, which you, and good Mrs. Baldwin do me the honour to approve. The things of *this* world take up too much of my time, of which indeed I have too little left, to undertake any thing like a reformation in matters of religion. When we can sow good seed, we should however do it, and wait, when we can do no better, with patience nature's time for their sprouting. Some lie many years in the ground, and at length certain favourable seasons or circumstances bring them forth with vigorous shoots and plentiful productions.

Had I been at home as you wish, soon after the peace, I might possibly have mitigated some of the severities against the royalists, believing as I do that fear and error rather than malice occasioned their desertion of their country's cause, and adoption of the King's. The public resentment against them is now so far abated,

that none who ask leave to return are refused, and many of them now live among us much at their ease. As to the restoration of confiscated estates, it is an operation that none of our politicians have as yet ventured to propose. They are a sort of people that love to fortify themselves in their projects by precedent. Perhaps they wait to see your government restore the forfeited estates in Scotland to the Scotch, those in Ireland to the Irish, and those in England to the Welch.

I am glad that the distressed exiles who remain with you have received, or are likely to receive, some compensation for their losses, for I commiserate their situation. It was clearly incumbent on the King to indemnify those he had seduced by his proclamations: but it seems not so clearly consistent with the wisdom of parliament to resolve doing it for him. If some mad King should think fit in a freak to make war upon his subjects of Scotland, or upon those of England, by the help of Scotland and Ireland (as the Stuarts did) may he not encourage followers by the precedent of these parliamentary gratuities, and thus set his subjects to cutting one another's throats, first with the hope of sharing in confiscations, and then with that of compensation in case of disappointment? The council of brutes without a fable were aware of this. Lest that fable may perhaps not have fallen in your way, I inclose a copy of it.

Your commercial treaty with France seems to show a growing improvement in the sentiments of both nations in the economical science. All Europe might be a great deal happier, with a little more understanding. We in America have lately had a convention for framing a new constitution. Inclosed I send you the result of their deliberations. Whether it will be generally acceptable and carried into execution is yet to be seen; but present appearances are in its favour.

I am always glad to hear from you, and of your welfare. I remember with pleasure the happy days we have spent together. Adieu, and believe me ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately, B. FRANKLIN.

To M. DUPONT DE NEMOURS, AT PARIS.

SIR, *Philadelphia, June 9, 1788.*

I have received your favour of December 31, with the extract of a letter which you wish to have translated and published here. But seven States having, before it arrived, ratified the new Constitution, and others being daily expected to do the same, after the fullest discussion in convention, and in all the public papers, 'till every body was tired of the argument; it seemed too late to propose delay, and especially the delay that must be occasioned by a revision and

correction of all the separate Constitutions. For it would take at least a year to convince thirteen States that the Constitutions they have practised ever since the revolution, without observing any imperfections in them so great as to be worth the trouble of amendment, are nevertheless so ill formed as to be unfit for continuation, or to be parts of a federal government. And when they should be so convinced, it would probably take some years more to make the connections. An eighth State has since acceded, and when a ninth is added, which is now daily expected, the Constitution will be carried into execution. It is probable however that at the first meeting of the new Congress, various amendments will be proposed and discussed, when I hope your *Ouvrage sur les principes et le bien des republiques en general* &c. &c. may be ready to put into their hands; and such a work from your hand I am confident, though it may not be entirely followed, will afford useful hints, and produce advantages of importance. But we must not expect that a new government may be formed, as a game of chess may be played, by a skilful hand, without a fault. The players of our game are so many, their ideas so different, their prejudices so strong and so various, and their particular interests independent of the general seeming so opposite, that not a move can be made that is not contested; the numerous objections confound the understanding; the wisest must agree to some unreasonable things, that reasonable ones of more consequence may be obtained, and thus chance has its share in many of the determinations, so that the play is more like *tric-trac* with a box of dice.

We are much pleased with the disposition of your government to favour our commerce, manifested in the late *réglement*. You appear to be possessed of a *truth* which few governments are possessed of, that A must take some of B's produce, otherwise B will not be able to pay for what he would take of A. But there is one thing wanting to facilitate and augment our intercourse. It is a dictionary, explaining the names of different articles of manufacture, in the two languages. When I was in Paris I received a large order for a great variety of goods, particularly of the kind called hardwares, i. e. wares of iron and steel: and when I shewed the invoice to your manufacturers, they did not understand what kinds of goods or instruments were meant by the names: nor could any English and French dictionary be found to explain them. So I sent to England for one of each sort, which might serve both as explanation and as a model, the latter being of importance likewise, since people are prejudiced in favour of *forms* they have been used to, though perhaps not the best. They cost me 25 guineas, but were lost by the way, and the peace coming on the scheme dropped. It would however, as I

imagine, be well worth receiving. For our merchants say we still send to England for such goods as we want, because there they understand our orders, and can execute them precisely. With great and sincere esteem, I am, &c. B. F.

TO THE PRINTER OF THE EVENING HERALD.

SIR,

The British news-writers are very assiduous in their endeavours to blacken America. Should we not be careful not to afford them any assistance by censures of one another, especially by censures not well founded.

I lately observed in one of your papers, the conduct of the State of Massachusetts reflected on as being inconsistent and absurd, as well as wicked, for attempting to raise a tax by a Stamp Act, and for carrying on the Slave Trade.

The writer of those reflections might have considered, that their principal objection to the Stamp Tax, was, its being imposed by a British parliament, which had no right to tax them, for otherwise a tax by Stamps is perhaps to be levied with as little inconvenience as any other that can be invented. Ireland has a Stamp Act of its own; but should Britain pretend to impose such a tax on the Irish people they would probably give a general opposition to it, and ought not for that to be charged with inconsistence.

One or two merchants in Boston, employing ships in the abominable African trade, may deservedly be condemned, though they do not bring their slaves home, but sell them in the West Indies. The State as such, has never, that I have heard of, given encouragement to the diabolical commerce; and there has always been fewer slaves in the New England governments, than in any other British colonies. National reflections are seldom just, and a whole people should not be decried for the crimes of a few individuals.

Your inserting this may make that brave people some amends, and will oblige one of your customers who is

A PENNSYLVANIAN.

END OF PART II.

MEMOIRS

OF

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

PRIVATE CORRESPONDENCE.

PART III.

LETTERS RELATING TO NEGOTIATIONS FOR PEACE, &c.

To David Hartley, Esq. M. P.

Dear Sir, *Passy, near Paris, Oct.* 14, 1777.

I received duly your letter of May 2, 77, including a copy of one you had sent me the year before, which never came to hand, and which it seems has been the case with some I wrote to you from America. Filled though our letters have always been with sentiments of good will to both countries and earnest desires of preventing their ruin and promoting their mutual felicity, I have been apprehensive that if it were known a correspondence subsisted between us, it might be attended with inconvenience to you. I have therefore been backward in writing, not caring to trust the post, and not well knowing who else to trust with my letters. But being now assured of a safe conveyance, I venture to write to you, especially as I think the subject such a one as you may receive a letter upon without censure.

Happy should I have been, if the honest warnings I gave of the fatal separation of interests as well as of affections, that must attend the measures commenced while I was in England, had been attended to, and the horrid mischief of this abominable war been thereby prevented. I should still be happy in any successful endeavours for restoring peace, consistent with the liberties, the safety and the honour of America. As to our submitting to the government of Great Britain, 'tis vain to think of it. She has given us by her numberless barbarities (by her malice in bribing slaves to murder their masters, and savages to massacre the families of farmers, with her baseness in rewarding the unfaithfulness of servants and debauching the virtue of honest seamen entrusted with our property) in the prosecution of the war, and in the treatment of the prisoners, so deep an impression of her depravity, that we never again can trust her in the management of our affairs and interests. It is now impossible to persuade our people, as I long endeavoured, that the war was merely ministerial, and that the nation bore still a good will to us. The infinite number of addresses printed in your Gazettes all approving the conduct of your government towards us, and encouraging our destruction by every possible means, the great majority in parliament constantly manifesting the same sentiments, and the popular public rejoicings on occasion of any news of the slaughter of an innocent and virtuous people fighting only in defence of their just rights; these, together with the recommendations of the same measures by even your celebrated moralists and divines in their writings and sermons, that are still approved and applauded in your great national assemblies, all join in convincing us that you are no longer the magnanimous enlightened nation we once esteemed you, and that you are unfit and unworthy to govern us, as not being able to govern your own passions.

But, as I have said, I should be nevertheless happy in seeing peace restored. For though if my friends and the friends of liberty and virtue, who still remain in England, could be drawn out of it, a continuance of this war to the ruin of the rest, would give me less concern, I cannot, as that removal is impossible, but wish for peace for their sakes, as well as for the sake of humanity and preventing further carnage.

This wish of mine, ineffective as it may be, induces me to mention to you that between nations long exasperated against each other in war, some act of generosity and kindness towards prisoners on one side has softened resentment and abated animosity on the other, so as to bring on an accommodation. You in England if you wish for peace have at present the opportunity of trying this means, with regard to

the prisoners now in your gaols. They complain of very severe treatment. They are far from their friends and families, and winter is coming on in which they must suffer extremely if continued in their present situation, fed scantily on bad provisions, without warm lodging, clothes or fire; and not suffered to invite or receive visits from their friends or even from the humane and charitable of their enemies. I can assure you from my own certain knowledge, that your people, prisoners in America, have been treated with great kindness; they have been served with the same rations of wholesome provisions with our own troops, comfortable lodgings have been provided for them, and they have been allowed large bounds of villages in the healthy air, to walk and amuse themselves with on their parole. Where you have thought fit to employ contractors to supply your people, these contractors have been protected and aided in their operations. Some considerable act of kindness towards our people would take off the reproach of inhumanity in that respect from the nation, and leave it where it ought with more certainty to lay, on the conductors of your war in America. This I hint to you, out of some remaining good will to a nation I once loved sincerely. But as things are and in my present temper of mind, not being overfond of receiving obligations, I shall content myself with proposing that your government would allow us to send or employ a commissary to take some care of those unfortunate people. Perhaps on your representations this might be speedily obtained in England, though it was refused most inhumanly at New York.

If you could have leisure to visit the gaols in which they are confined, and should be desirous of knowing the truth relative to the treatment they receive, I wish you would take the trouble of distributing among the most necessitous according to their wants five or six hundred pounds for which your drafts on me here shall be punctually honoured. You could then be able to speak with some certainty to the point in parliament, and this might be attended with good effects.

If you cannot obtain for us permission to send a commissary, possibly you may find a trusty humane discreet person at Plymouth, and another at Portsmouth, who would undertake to communicate what relief we may be able to afford those unfortunate men, martyrs to the cause of liberty. Your king will not reward you for taking this trouble, but God will. I shall not mention the gratitude of America: you will have what is better, the applause of your own good conscience. Our captains have set at liberty above two hundred of your people made prisoners by our armed vessels and brought into France, besides a great number dismissed at sea on your coasts, to whom vessels were given to carry them in. But you have

not returned us a man in exchange. If we had sold your people to the Moors at Sallee, as you have many of ours to the African and East India Companies, could you have complained?

In revising what I have written, I found too much warmth in it, and was about to strike out some parts. Yet I let them go as they will afford you this one reflection. "If a man naturally cool, and rendered still cooler by old age, is so warmed by our treatment of his country, how much must those people in general be exasperated against us! and why are we making inveterate enemies by our barbarity, not only of the present inhabitants of a great country, but of their infinitely more numerous posterity; who will in all future ages detest the name of *Englishman*, as much as the children in Holland now do those of *Alva* and *Spaniard*." This will certainly happen unless your conduct is speedily changed, and the national resentment falls, where it ought to fall heavily, on your ministry, or perhaps rather on the ——— whose will they only execute.

With the greatest esteem and affection, and best wishes for your prosperity, I have the honour to be, dear Sir, &c. B. FRANKLIN.

To Mr. Hutton.[1]

MY DEAR OLD FRIEND, *Passy, Feb.* 1, 1778.

You desired that if I had no proposition to make, I would at least give my advice.

I think it is Ariosto who says, that all things lost on earth, are to be found in the moon; on which somebody remarked that there must be a great deal of good advice in the moon. If so there is a good deal of mine formerly given and lost in this business. I will however at your request give a little more, but without the least expectation that it will be followed; for none but God can at the same time give good counsel, and wisdom to make use of it.

You have lost by this mad war, and the barbarity with which it has been carried on, not only the government and commerce of America, and the public revenues and private wealth arising from that commerce, but what is more, you have lost the esteem, respect, friendship, and affection of all that great and growing people, who consider you at present, and whose posterity will consider you, as the worst and wickedest nation upon earth. A peace you may undoubtedly obtain, by

[1] See an account of this gentleman, Part 1. p. 37.

dropping all your pretensions to govern us: and by your superior skill in huckstering negociation, you may possibly make such an apparently advantageous bargain as shall be applauded in your parliament; but you cannot with the peace recover the affections of that people, it will not be a lasting nor a profitable one, nor will it afford you any part of that strength which you once had by your union with them, and might (if you had been wise enough to take advice) have still retained.

To recover their respect and affection you must tread back the steps you have taken.

Instead of honouring and rewarding the American advisers and promoters of this war, you should disgrace them; with all those who have inflamed the nation against America by their malicious writings; and all the ministers and generals who have prosecuted the war with such inhumanity. This would show a national change of disposition, and a disapprobation of what had passed.

In proposing terms, you should not only grant such as the necessity of your affairs may evidently oblige you to grant, but such additional ones as may show your generosity, and thereby demonstrate your good will. For instance, perhaps you might by your treaty retain all Canada, Nova Scotia, and the Floridas. But if you would have a real friendly as well as able ally in America, and avoid all occasion of future discord which will otherwise be continually arising on your American frontiers, you should throw in those countries. And you may call it if you please an indemnification for the burning of their towns, which indemnification will otherwise be some time or other demanded.

I know your people will not see the utility of such measures, and will never follow them, and even call it insolence and impudence in me to mention them. I have however complied with your desire, and am as ever your affectionate friend,

B. FRANKLIN.

To Mr. Hutton.

DEAR OLD FRIEND, *Passy, Feb.* 12, 1778.

I wrote the above some time before I received yours, acquainting me with your speedy and safe return, which gave me pleasure. I doubted after I had written it whether it would be well to send it; for as your proud nation despises us exceedingly, and demands and expects absolute and humble submission, all talk of treaty must appear imprudence and tend to provoke rather than conciliate. As you still press me by your last to say something; I conclude to send what I had written, for I think the advice is good though it must

be useless; and I cannot, as some amongst you desire, make propositions, having none committed to me to make; but we can treat if any are made to us; which however we do not expect. I abominate with you all murder, and I may add that the slaughter of men in an unjust cause is nothing less than murder; I therefore never think of your present ministers and their abettors, but with the image strongly painted in my view, of their hands, red, wet, and dropping with the blood of my countrymen, friends, and relations. No peace can be signed by those hands. Peace and friendship will nevertheless subsist for ever between Mr. Hutton and his affectionate friend, B. FRANKLIN.

To D. HARTLEY, ESQ. M. P.

DEAR SIR, *Passy, Feb.* 12, 1778.

A thousand thanks for your so readily engaging in the means of relieving our poor captives, and the pains you have taken, and the advances you have made for that purpose. I received your kind letter of the 3d instant, and send you enclosed a bill of 100*l.* I much approve of Mr. Wren's prudent, as well as benevolent conduct, in the disposition of the money, and wish him to continue doing what shall appear to him and you to be right, which I am persuaded will appear the same to me and my colleagues here. I beg you will present him when you write my respectful acknowledgments.

Your "earnest caution and request that nothing may ever persuade America to throw themselves into the arms of France; for that times may mend, and that an American must always be a stranger in France, but that Great Britain may for ages to come be their home," marks the goodness of your heart, your regard for us, and love of your country. But when your nation is hiring all the cut-throats it can collect of all countries and colours to destroy us, it is hard to persuade us not to ask or accept aid from any power that may be prevailed with to grant it; and this only from the hope that though you now thirst for our blood and pursue us with fire and sword, you may in some future time treat us kindly. This is too much patience to be expected of us; indeed I think it is not in human nature. The Americans are received and treated here in France with a cordiality, a respect and affection they never experienced in England when they most deserved it; and which is now (after all the pains taken to exasperate the English against them, and render them odious as well as contemptible) less to be expected there than ever. And I cannot see why we may not, upon an alliance, hope for a continuance of it, at least of as much as the Swiss enjoy with whom France have maintained a faithful friend-

ship for two hundred years past, and whose people appear to live here in as much esteem as the natives. America has been *forced* and *driven* into the arms of France. She was a dutiful and virtuous daughter. A cruel mother-in-law turned her out of doors, defamed her, and sought her life. All the world knows her innocence and takes her part; and her friends hope soon to see her honourably married. They can never persuade her return and submission to so barbarous an enemy. In her future prosperity, if she forgets and forgives, 'tis all that can be reasonably expected of her. I believe she will make as good and useful a wife as she did a daughter, that her husband will love and honour her, and that the family from which she was so wickedly expelled, will long regret the loss of her.

I know not whether a peace with us is desired in England. I rather think it is not at present, unless on the old impossible terms of submission and receiving pardon. Whenever you shall be disposed to make peace upon equal and reasonable terms, you will find little difficulty if you get first an honest ministry. The present have all along acted so deceitfully and treacherously as well as inhumanly towards the Americans, that I imagine, the absolute want of all confidence in them, will make a treaty at present between them and the Congress impracticable.

The subscription for the prisoners will have excellent effects in favour of England and Englishmen. The Scotch subscriptions for raising troops to destroy us, though amounting to much greater sums, will not do their nation half so much good. If you have an opportunity I wish you would express our respectful acknowledgments and thanks to your Committee and contributors, whose benefactions will make our poor people as comfortable as their situation can permit. Adieu, my dear friend. Accept my thanks for the excellent papers you inclosed to me. Your endeavours for peace though unsuccessful will always be a comfort to you, and in time when this mad war shall be universally execrated, will be a solid addition to your reputation. I am ever with the highest esteem, &c.

P. S. An old friend of mine, Mr. Hutton, a chief of the Moravians, who is often at the Queen's palace, and is sometimes spoken to by the King, was over here lately. He pretended to no commission, but urged me much to propose some terms of peace, which I avoided. He has wrote to me since his return, pressing the same thing, and expressing with some confidence his opinion that we might have every thing short of absolute independence, &c. Inclosed I send my answers; open that you may read them, and if you please copy before you deliver or forward them.

They will serve to show you more fully my sentiments, though they serve no other purpose.

To D. HARTLEY, Esq. M. P.

DEAR SIR, *Passy, Feb.* 26, 1778.

I received yours of the 18th and 20th of this month, with Lord North's proposed bills. The more I see of the ideas and projects of your ministry and their little arts and schemes of amusing and dividing us, the more I admire the prudent, manly, and magnanimous propositions contained in your intended motion for an address to the King. What reliance can we have on an act expressing itself to be only a declaration of the *intention* of parliament concerning the *exercise* of the RIGHT of imposing taxes in America, when in the bill itself, as well as in the title, a right is supposed and claimed which never existed; and a *present intention* only is declared not to use it, which may be changed by another act next sessions, with a preamble that this *intention* being found inexpedient, it is thought proper to repeal this act and resume the exercise of *the right* in its full extent. If any solid permanent benefit was intended by this, why is it confined to the colonies of North America, and not extended to the loyal ones in the sugar islands? But it is now needless to criticise, as all acts that suppose your future government of the colonies can be no longer significant.

In the act for appointing commissioners instead of full powers to agree upon terms of peace and friendship, with a promise of ratifying such treaty as they shall make in pursuance of those powers; it is declared that their agreements shall have no force nor effect, nor be carried into execution till approved of by parliament; so that every thing of importance will be uncertain. But they are allowed to proclaim a cessation of arms, and revoke their proclamation as soon as in consequence of it our militia have been allowed to go home: they may suspend the operation of acts prohibiting trade, and take off that suspension when our merchants in consequence of it have been induced to send their ships to sea; in short they may do every thing that can have a tendency to divide and distract us, but nothing that can afford us security. Indeed, Sir, your ministers do not know us. We may not be quite so cunning as they, but we have really more sense, as well as more courage than they have ever been willing to give us credit for; and I am persuaded these acts will rather obstruct peace than promote it, and that they will not answer in America the mischievous and malevolent ends for which they were intended. In England they may indeed amuse the public creditors, give hopes and expectations

that shall be of some present use, and continue the mis-managers a little longer in their places. *Voila tout!*

In return for your repeated advice to us not to conclude any treaty with the House of Bourbon, permit me to give (through you) a little advice to the Whigs in England. Let nothing induce them to join with the Tories in supporting and continuing this wicked war against the Whigs of America, whose assistance they may hereafter want to secure their own liberties; or whose country they may be glad to retire to for the enjoyment of them.

If peace by a treaty with America upon equal terms, were really desired, your Commissioners need not go there for it, supposing, as by the bill they are empowered "to treat with such person or persons as in their wisdom and discretion they shall think meet," they should happen to conceive that the Commissioners of the Congress at Paris might be included in that description. I am ever, dear Sir, &c. B. F.

P. S. Seriously on farther thoughts I am of opinion, that if wise and honest men, such as Sir George Saville, the Bishop of St. Asaph, and yourself, were to come over here immediately with powers to treat, you might not only obtain peace with America but prevent a war with France.

To Mr. Hutton.

Passy, March 24, 1778.

My dear old friend was in the right not "to call in question the sincerity of my words, where I say, February 12, *we can treat if any propositions are made to us.*" They were true then, and are so still, if Britain has not declared war with France; for in that case we shall undoubtedly think ourselves obliged to continue the war as long as she does. But methinks you should have taken us at our word, and have sent immediately your propositions in order to prevent such a war, if you did not chuse it. Still I conceive it would be well to do it, if you have not already rashly begun the war. Assure yourself nobody more sincerely wishes perpetual peace among men than I do; but there is a prior wish that they would be equitable and just, otherwise such peace is not possible, and indeed wicked men have no right to expect it. Adieu! I am ever yours most affectionately,

B. Franklin.

Note from WILLIAM PULTNEY, Esq. M. P. (under the assumed Name o *Williams).*

Mr. Williams returned this morning to Paris, and will be glad to see Dr. Franklin, whenever it is convenient for the Doctor, at the *Hotel Frasiliere, Rue Tournou.* It is near the Hotel where he lodged when the Doctor saw him a fortnight ago. He does not propose to go abroad, and therefore the Doctor will find him at any hour. He understands that Mr. Alexander is not yet returned from Dijon, which he regrets.

Sunday Morning, March 29, 1788.

[*The following Letter to Mr. Pultney, was not sent, but contains what was said in a Conversation Dr. Franklin had with him in Paris*].

To WILLIAM PULTNEY, Esq.

SIR, *Passy, March* 30, 1778.

When I first had the honour of conversing with you on the subject of peace, I mentioned it as my opinion that every proposition which implied our voluntarily agreeing to return to a dependence on Britain was now become impossible, that a peace on equal terms undoubtedly might be made; and that though we had no particular powers to treat of peace with England, we had general powers to make treaties of peace, amity, and commerce, with any state in Europe, by which I thought we might be authorized to treat with Britain; who if sincerely disposed to peace, might save time and much bloodshed by treating with us directly.

I also gave it as my opinion, that in the treaty to be made, Britain should endeavour by the fairness and generosity of the terms she offered, to recover the esteem, confidence, and affection of America, without which the peace could not be so beneficial, as it was not likely to be lasting. In this I had the pleasure to find you of my opinion.

But I see by the propositions you have communicated to me, that the ministers cannot yet divest themselves of the idea, that the power of parliament over us is constitutionally absolute and unlimited; and that the limitations they may be willing now to put to it by treaty, are so many favours, or so many benefits for which we are to make compensation.

As our opinions in America are totally different, a treaty on the terms proposed appears to me utterly impracticable either here or there. Here we certainly cannot

make it, having not the smallest authority to make even the declaration specified in the proposed letter, without which, if I understood you right, treating with us cannot be commenced.

I sincerely wish as much for peace as you do, and I have enough remaining of good will for England to wish it for her sake as well as for our own, and for the sake of humanity. In the present state of things, the proper means of obtaining it, in my opinion, are to acknowledge the independence of the United States, and then enter at once into a treaty with us for a suspension of arms, with the usual provisions relating to distances; and another for establishing peace, friendship, and commerce, such as France has made. This might prevent a war between you and that kingdom, which in the present circumstances and temper of the two nations an accident may bring on every day, though contrary to the interest and without the previous intention of either. Such a treaty we might probably now make with the approbation of our friends; but if you go to war with them on account of their friendship for us, we are bound by ties, stronger than can be formed by any treaty, to fight against you with them, as long as the war against them shall continue.

May God at last grant that wisdom to your national councils which he seems long to have denied them, and which only sincere, just, and humane intentions can merit or expect. With great personal esteem, I have the honour to be, Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

FROM MR. ALEXANDER TO DR. FRANKLIN.

MY DEAR SIR,

Upon a night's reflection it is thought right that you be possessed of the inclosed,[1] to be afterwards returned without taking copy in case no business be done. Will you let me know by the bearer if we are to see you in town to day, and when, that I may be at hand?

Saturday Morning, April 4, 1778.

TO DR. BANCROFT,[2] F. R. S. LONDON.

DEAR SIR, *Passy, April 16*, 1778.

I wish you would assure our friend, that Dr. Franklin never

[1] Some proposals on the part of the British ministry, disapproved of by Dr. Franklin, and returned.

[2] An American gentleman of great worth and abilities; an intimate and much respected friend of Dr. Franklin's, to whom the United States are greatly indebted for his exertion and assistance in the cause of their Independence.

gave any such expectations to Mr. Pultney. On the contrary, he told him that the Commissioners could not succeed in their mission, whether they went to recover the *dependance* or to *divide*. His opinion is confirmed by the inclosed resolves, which perhaps it may not be amiss to publish in England. Please to send me the newspaper. Yours affectionately, B. FRANKLIN.

HIS EXCELLENCY JOSEPH REED, ESQ.
President of the State of Pennsylvania.

SIR, *Passy, March* 19, 1780.

I have just received the pamphlet you did me the honour to send me by M. Gerard, and have read it with pleasure; not only as the clear state of facts, it does you honour, but as it proves the falsehood of a man, who also showed no regard to truth in what he said of me, "*that I approved of the propositions he carried over.*" The truth is this, his brother, Mr. Pultney, came here with those propositions; and after stipulating that if I did not approve of them, I should not speak of them to any person, he communicated them to me. I told him frankly, on his desiring to know my sentiments, that I DID NOT *approve of them, and that I was sure they* WOULD NOT *be accepted in America.* But I said there are two other Commissioners here. I will, if you please, show your propositions to them, and you will hear their opinions. I will also show them to the ministry here, without whose knowledge and concurrence we can take no step in such affairs. No, said he; as you do not approve of them, it can answer no purpose to shew them to any body else: the reasons that weigh with you will also weigh with them: therefore, I now pray that no mention may be made of my having been here, or my business. To this I agreed, and therefore nothing could be more astonishing to me, than to see in an American newspaper, that direct lie, in a letter from Mr. Johnstone, joined with two other falsehoods, relating to the time of the treaty, and to the opinion of Spain!

In proof of the above, I inclose a certificate of a friend of Mr. Pultney's, the only person present at our interview; and I do it the rather at this time, because I am informed that another calumniator (the same who formerly in his private letters to particular members, accused you with Messrs. Jay, Duanes, Langdon, and Harrison, of betraying the secrets of Congress in a correspondence with the ministry) has made this transaction with Mr. Pultney, an article of accusation against me, as having approved the same propositions. He proposes, I understand, to settle in your government. I caution you to beware of him; for in sowing suspicions and

jealousies, in creating misunderstandings and quarrels among friends, in malice, subtilty, and indefatigable industry, he has, I think, no equal.

I am glad to see that you continue to preside in our new State, as it shows that your public conduct is approved by the people. You have had a difficult time, which required abundance of prudence; and you have been equal to the occasion. The disputes about the constitution seem to have subsided. It is much admired here and all over Europe, and will draw over many families of fortune, to settle under it as soon as there is a peace. The defects that may on seven years' trial be found in it, can be amended, when the time comes for considering them. With great and sincere esteem and respect, I have the honour to be, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

I do hereby certify, whom it may concern, that I was with Mr. Pultney and Dr. Franklin at Paris, when in a conversation between them on the subject of certain propositions for a reconciliation with America, offered by Mr. Pultney, Dr. Franklin said he did not approve of them, nor did he think they would be approved in America, but that he would communicate them to his colleagues and the French ministry. This Mr. Pultney opposed, saying that it would answer no good end, as he was persuaded that what weighed with Dr. Franklin would weigh also with them; and therefore desired that no mention might be made of his having offered such propositions, or even of his having been here, on such business; but that the whole might be buried in oblivion, agreeable to what had been stipulated by Mr. Pultney, and agreed to by Dr. Franklin, before the propositions were produced, which Dr. Franklin accordingly promised. Paris, March 19, 1780.

(Signed) WILLIAM ALEXANDER.

DEAR SIR,

I send you adjoined, the certificate you desire; and am perfectly convinced from conversations I have since had with Mr. Pultney, that nobody was authorized to hold the language which has been imputed to him on that subject; and as I have a high opinion of his candour and worth, I know it must be painful to him to be brought into question in matters of fact with persons he esteems. I could wish that this matter may receive no farther publicity than what is necessary for your justification. I am, &c. W. ALEXANDER.

To Dr. Franklin, Passy.

To Count de Vergennes,
Minister for Foreign Affairs, Versailles.

Sir, *Passy, April 24, 1778.*

Mr. Hartley, member of parliament, an old acquaintance of mine, arrived here from London on Sunday last. He is generally in the opposition, especially on American questions, but has some respect for Lord North. In conversation he expressed the strongest anxiety for peace with America, and appeared extremely desirous to know my sentiments of the terms which might probably be acceptable if offered; whether America would not to obtain peace grant some superior advantages in trade to Britain, and enter into an alliance offensive and defensive; whether if war should be declared against France, we had obliged ourselves by treaty to join with her against England. My answers have been, That the United States were not fond of war, and with the advice of their friends would probably be easily prevailed with to make peace on equitable terms, but we had no terms committed to us to propose, and I did not chuse to mention any. That Britain having injured us heavily by making this unjust war upon us, might think herself well off, if *on reparation of those injuries*, we admitted her to *equal* advantages with other nations in commerce; but certainly she had no reason to expect *superior*. That her known fondness for war, and the many instances of her readiness to engage in wars on frivolous occasions, were probably sufficient to cause an immediate rejection of every proposition for an *offensive* alliance with her. And that if she made war against France on our account, a peace with us at the same time was impossible; for that having met with friendship from that generous nation when we were cruelly oppressed by England, we were under ties stronger than treaties could form, to make common cause, which we should certainly do to the utmost of our power. Here has also been with me a Mr. Chapman, who says he is a member of the parliament of Ireland, on his way home from Nice, where he had been for the recovery of his health. He pretended to call on me only from motives of respect for my character, &c. But after a few compliments he entered on a similar discourse, urging much to know what terms would satisfy America, and whether on having *peace and independence granted* to us, we should not be willing to submit to the Navigation Act, or give equivalent privileges in trade to Britain. The purport of my answer to him was in short, that *peace* was of *equal* value to England as to us, and *independence* we were already in possession of: that therefore England's offer to grant them to us could not be considered as proposing any favour, or as giving her a right to expect peculiar advantages in com-

merce. By his importunity I found his visit was not so occasional as he represented it: and from some expressions I conjectured he might be sent by Lord Shelburne, to sound me, and collect some information. On the whole, I gather from these conversations, that the opposition as well as the ministry are perplexed with the present situation of affairs, and know not which way to turn themselves, whether it is best to go backward or forward, or what steps to take to extricate that nation from its present dangerous situation.

I thought it right to give your Excellency an account of these interviews, and to acquaint you with my intention of avoiding such hereafter, as I see but little prospect of utility in them, and think they are very liable to hurtful misrepresentations.

By advices from London we learn that a fleet for Quebec, with goods valued at 500,000*l.* sterling, is to sail about the end of this month under convoy only of a single frigate of thirty guns, in which is to go Governor Haldimand.

Inclosed I send a paper I have just received from London. It is not subscribed by any name, but I know the hand. It is from an old friend of general and great acquaintance, and marks strongly the present distress and despair of considerate people in England. I have the honour to be, with the greatest respect, your Excellency's, &c. B. FRANKLIN.

FROM COUNT DE VERGENNES TO DR. FRANKLIN.

A Versailles, le April 25, 1778.

J'ai rendu compte au Roi, Monsieur, du contenû de la lettre que vous m'avez fait l'honneur de m'ecrire hier, et sa majesté me charge de vous temoigner toute sa satisfaction de votre empressement à nous informer de l'objet de vos conferences avec M. Hartley. Le grand art de l'Angleterre fut toujours de chercher à diviser, c'est un bon moyen en effet pour s'assurer l'empire; mais ce n'est ni auprès de vous ni auprès de vos collegues qu'il peut etre employé avec succès; je porte avec confiance le meme jugement des etats unis. Au reste il n'est pas possible, Monsieur, de repondre avec plus de noblesse, de franchise et de fermeté que vous l'avez fait a M. Hartley: il n'a pas lieu d'etre content de sa mission. J'ignore si ce membre du parlement en a une pour nous; il desire de me voir, et je l'attens dans la matinée. Je ne serois pas surpris qu'il ne se proposat de semer la defiance entre nous en introduisant une double negociation, mais je saurai y obvier, et vous serez instruit de ce qui se passera entre nous pour peu qu'il y ait quelque chose d'interessant.

J'ai l'honneur d'être avec une tres parfaite consideration, Monsieur, votre tres humble et tres obeissant serviteur, DE VERGENNES.

To DR. FRANKLIN, PASSY.

DEAR SIR, *Paris, April 29,* 1778.

I will take care of all your commissions. This moment a second packet of infinite value is received, which I shall cherish as a mark of affection from you. I opened the letter by mistake which came with it, and soon saw it was not for me. I hope you will excuse it. I chuse rather to throw myself upon your goodness for the excuse, than any thing else. I shall not set out till between one and two; therefore if you will be so good as to send me another copy, I will take care of it and deliver it safely.

God bless you, my dear friend. No exertion or endeavour on my part shall be wanting, that we may some time or other meet again in peace. Your powers are infinitely more influential than mine. To those powers I trust my last hopes. I will conclude, blessed are the peace-makers. Your affectionate friend,

D. HARTLEY.

If tempestuous times should come, take care of your own safety: events are uncertain, and men may be capricious. Yours, &c.

ANSWER.

I thank you for your kind caution, but having nearly finished a long life, I set but little value on what remains of it. Like a draper, when one chaffers with him for a remnant, I am ready to say, "As it is only the fag-end, I will not differ with you about it, take it for what you please." Perhaps the best use such an old fellow can be put to, is to make a martyr of him, B. F.

An anonymous letter delivered to me at 9 in the evening May 20, 78. It seems intended to draw me out into those gardens for some bad purpose; as the person who pretended to have such urgent business with me has never since appeared; though (refusing to go out at that time of night) I appointed the next day at 11 o'clock. B. FRANKLIN.

20th *May,* 1778.

Une personne qui aurois quelque chose de tres interessant et

pressé a vous communiquer, desirerois, Monsieur, que vous voulussiez bien luy donner un moment pour luy procurer l'agrément de s'entretenir avec vous sur le dont il sagit.

L'on sais que vouz venéz quelquefois au jardin des eaux, et comme l'on ne veut l'être apperçu d'aucun de vos gens (et que l'on a des raisons très fortes pour cela), l'on sont transporté icy tout exposé de Paris dans l'espoir que l'on aura l'avantage de vous voire et de vous parler d'objet d'autan plus important qu'il concerne des personnes distingués.

ANSWER TO A LETTER FROM BRUSSELS.

SIR, *Passy, July* 1, 1778.

I received your letter dated at Brussels the 16th past.

My vanity might possibly be flattered by your expressions of compliment to my understanding, if your proposals did not more clearly manifest a mean opinion of it.

You conjure me in the name of the omniscient and just God before whom I must appear, and by my hopes of future fame, to consider if some expedient cannot be found to put a stop to the desolation of America, and prevent the miseries of a general war. As I am conscious of having taken every step in my power to prevent the breach and no one to widen it; I can appear cheerfully before that God, fearing nothing from his justice in this particular, though I have much occasion for his mercy in many others. As to my future fame I am content to rest it on my past and present conduct, without seeking an addition to it in the crooked, dark paths you propose to me, where I should most certainly lose it. This your solemn address would therefore have been more properly made to your sovereign and his venal parliament. He and they who wickedly began and madly continue a war for the desolation of America, are alone accountable for the consequences.

You endeavour to impress me with a bad opinion of French faith; but the instances of their friendly endeavours to serve a race of weak princes who by their own imprudence defeated every attempt to promote their interest weigh but little with me, when I consider the steady friendship of France to the thirteen United States of Switzerland which has now continued inviolate two hundred years. You tell me that she will certainly cheat us, and that she despises us already. I do not believe that she will cheat us, and I am not certain that she despises us, but I see clearly that you are endeavouring to cheat us by your conciliatory bills; that you actually despised our understandings when you flattered yourselves those artifices

would succeed; and that not only France but all Europe, yourselves included, most certainly and for ever would despise us if we were weak enough to accept your insidious propositions.

Our expectations of the future grandeur of America, are not so magnificent, and therefore not so vain or visionary as you represent them to be. The body of our people are not merchants, but humble husbandmen, who delight in the cultivation of their lands, which from their fertility and the variety of our climates, are capable of furnishing all the necessaries and conveniences of life without external commerce. And we have too much land to have the least temptation to extend our territory by conquest from peaceable neighbours, as well as too much justice to think of it. Our militia you find by experience are sufficient to defend our lands from invasion; and the commerce with us will be defended by all the nations who find an advantage in it. We therefore have not the occasion you imagine of fleets, or standing armies, but may leave those expensive machines to be maintained for the pomp of princes, and the wealth of ancient states. We propose, if possible, to live in peace with all mankind; and after you have been convinced, to your cost, that there is nothing to be got by attacking us, we have reason to hope that no other power will judge it prudent to quarrel with us, lest they divert us from our own quiet industry, and turn us into corsairs preying upon theirs. The weight therefore of an independent empire, which you seem so certain of our inability to bear, will not be so great as you imagine. The expence of our civil government we have always borne, and can easily bear, because it is small. A virtuous and laborious people may be cheaply governed. Determining as we do to have no offices of profit, nor any sinecures or useless appointments, so common in ancient and corrupted states, we can govern ourselves a year for the sum you pay in a single department, or for what one jobbing contractor, by the favour of a minister, can cheat you out of in a single article.

You think we flatter ourselves and are deceived into an opinion that England *must* acknowledge our independency. We on the other hand think you flatter yourselves in imagining such an acknowledgment a vast boon which we strongly desire, and which you may gain some great advantage by granting or withholding. We have never asked it of you. We only tell you, that you can have no treaty with us but as an independent State; and you may please yourselves and your children with the rattle of your right to govern us, as long as you have done with that of your King's being King of France, without giving us the least concern, if you do not attempt to exercise it. That this pretended right is indisputable, as you

say, we utterly deny. Your parliament never had a right to govern us, and your King has forfeited it by his bloody tyranny. But I thank you for letting me know a little of your mind, that even if the parliament should acknowledge our independency, the act would not be binding to posterity, and that your nation would resume and prosecute the claim as soon as they found it convenient from the influence of your passions, and your present malice against us. We suspected before, that you would not be actually bound by your conciliatory acts longer than till they had served their purpose of inducing us to disband our forces, but we were not certain that you were knaves by principle and that we ought not to have the least confidence in your offers, promises or treaties, though confirmed by parliament. I now indeed recollect my being informed long since, when in England, that a certain very great personage, then young, studied much a certain book entitled *Arcana imperii.* I had the curiosity to procure the book and read it. There are sensible and good things in it, but some bad ones; for if I remember right, a particular king is applauded for his politically exciting a rebellion among his subjects at a time when they had not strength to support it, that he might in subduing them take away their privileges which were troublesome to him: and a question is formally stated and discussed, *Whether a prince, to appease a revolt, makes promises of indemnity to the revolters, is obliged to fulfil those promises?* Honest and good men would say, aye: but this politician says as you say, no. And he gives this pretty reason, that though it was right to make the promises, because otherwise the revolt would not be suppressed; yet it would be wrong to keep them, because revolters ought to be punished to deter future revolts. If these are the principles of your nation, no confidence can be placed in you, it is in vain to treat with you, and the wars can only end in being reduced to an utter inability of continuing them.

One main drift of your letter seems to be to impress me with an idea of your own impartiality, by just censures of your ministers and measures, and to draw from me propositions of peace, or approbations of those you have enclosed me, which you intimate may by your means be conveyed to the king directly without the intervention of those ministers. Would you have me give them to, or drop them for a stranger I may find next Monday in the church of Notre Dame, to be known by a rose in his hat? You yourself, Sir, are quite unknown to me, you have not trusted me with your true name. Our taking the least step towards a treaty with England through you, might, if you are an enemy, be made use of to ruin us with our new and good friends. I may be indiscreet enough in many things; but

certainly if I were disposed to make propositions (which I cannot do, having none committed to me to make) I should never think of delivering them to the Lord knows who, to be carried to the Lord knows where; to serve no one knows what purposes. Being at this time one of the most remarkable figures in Paris, even my appearance in the church of Notre Dame, where I cannot have any conceivable business, and especially being seen to leave or drop any letter to any person there, would be a matter of some speculation, and might from the suspicions it must naturally give, have very mischievous consequences to our credit here. The very proposing of a correspondence so to be managed, in a manner not necessary where *fair dealing* is intended, gives just reason to suppose you intend *the contrary*. Besides, as your court has sent commissioners to treat with the congress, with all the powers that would be given them by the crown under the act of parliament, what *good purpose* can be served by privately obtaining propositions from us? Before those commissioners went, we might have treated in virtue of our general powers, (with the knowledge, advice, and approbation of our friends) upon any propositions made to us. But under the present circumstances for us to make propositions, while a treaty is supposed to be actually on foot with the congress, would be extremely improper, highly presumptous with regard to our honourable constituents, and answer no good end whatever.

I write this letter to you, notwithstanding (which I think I can convey in a less mysterious manner; and guess it may come to your hands;) I write it because I would let you know our sense of your procedure which appears as insidious as that of your conciliatory bills. Your true way to obtain peace, if your ministers desire it, is to propose openly to the congress fair and equal terms; and you may possibly come sooner to such a resolution, when you find that personal flatteries, general cajolings, and panegyrics on our *virtue* and *wisdom* are not likely to have the effect you seem to expect, the persuading us to act *basely* and *foolishly* in betraying our country and posterity into the hands of our most bitter enemies, giving up or selling of our arms, and warlike stores, dismissing our ships of war and troops, and putting those enemies in possession of our forts and ports. This proposition of delivering ourselves bound and gagged, ready for hanging without even a right to complain, and without a friend to be found afterwards among all mankind, you would have us embrace upon the faith of an act of parliament! Good God! an act of your parliament! This demonstrates that you do not yet know us, and that you fancy we do not know you: but it is not merely this flimsy faith that we are to act upon; you offer us *hope*, the hope of PLACES, PENSIONS and

PEERAGE. These, judging from yourselves, you think are motives irresistible. This offer to corrupt us, Sir, is with me your credential, and convinces me that you are not a private volunteer in your application. It bears the stamp of British Court intrigue, and the signature of your King. But think for a moment in what light it must be viewed in America. By PLACES which cannot come among us, for you take care by a special article to keep them to yourselves. We must then pay the salaries in order to enrich ourselves with these places. But you will give us PENSIONS; probably to be paid too out of your expected American revenue; and which none of us can accept without deserving and perhaps obtaining a *suspension*. PEERAGES! alas! Sir, our long observation of the vast servile majority of your peers voting constantly for every measure proposed by a minister, however weak or wicked, leaves us small respect for them, and we consider it as a sort of tar-and-feather honour, or a mixture of foulness and folly; which every man among us who should accept from your King, would be obliged to renounce or exchange for that conferred by the mobs of their own country, or wear it with everlasting shame. I am, Sir, your humble servant, B. FRANKLIN.

[*Letter in answer to the Propositions of quitting the alliance with France.*
Supposed to be to DAVID HARTLEY, Esq.]

DEAR SIR, *Passy, Feb.* 3, 1779.

I have just received your favour of the 23d past, in which you mention, "that the alliance between France and America is the great stumbling block, in the way of making peace;" and you go on to observe, that "whatever engagements America may have entered into, they may, at least by the consent of parties, *be relinquished*, for the purpose of removing so material an obstacle to any general treaty of free and unengaged parties." Adding that "if the parties could meet for the sake of peace upon *free* and *open* ground, you should think *that* a very fair proposition to be offered to the people of England, and an equitable proposition in itself." The long, steady, and kind regard you have shewn for the welfare of America by the whole tenor of your conduct in parliament, satisfies me, that this proposition never took its rise with you, but has been suggested from some other quarter; and that your excess of humanity, your love of peace, and your fear for us that the destruction we are threatened with, will certainly be effected, have thrown a mist before your eyes which hindered you from seeing the malignity and mischief of it. We know that your K. hates Whigs and Presbyterians; that he thirsts for our blood; of which he has already drunk large draughts; that weak

and unprincipled ministers are ready to execute the wickedest of his orders, and his venal parliament equally ready to vote them just. Not the smallest appearance of a reason can be imagined capable of inducing us to think of relinquishing a solid alliance with one of the most amiable as well as most powerful princes of Europe, for the expectation of unknown terms of peace to be afterwards offered to us by *such a government*. A government that has already shamefully broken all the compacts it ever made with us. This is worse than advising us to drop the substance for the shadow. The dog after he found his mistake might possibly have recovered his mutton; but we could never hope to be trusted again by France, or indeed by any other nation under heaven. Nor does there appear any more necessity for dissolving an alliance with France before you can treat with us, than there would of dissolving your alliance with Holland, or your union with Scotland before we could treat with you. Ours is therefore no *material obstacle* to a treaty as you suppose it to be. Had Lord North been the author of such a proposition, all the world would have said it was insidious, and meant only to deceive and divide us from our friends, and then to ruin us: supposing our fears might be strong enough to procure an acceptance of it. But thanks to God that is not the case! We have long since settled all the account in our own minds. We know the worst you can do to us, if you have your wish, is to confiscate our estates and take our lives, to rob and murder us; and this you have seen we are ready to hazard, rather than come again under your detested government.

You must observe, my dear friend, that I am a little warm. Excuse me! 'Tis over. Only let me counsel you not to think of being sent hither on so fruitless an errand as that of making such a proposition.

It puts me in mind of the comic farce intitled *God-send*, or *the Wreckers*. You may have forgotten it; but I will endeavour to amuse you by recollecting a little of it.

Scene. *Mount's Bay*. A ship riding at anchor in a great storm. A lee shore full of rocks, and lined with people, furnished with axes and carriages to cut up wrecks, knock the sailors on the head, and carry off the plunder; *according to custom*.

1*st Wrecker*. This ship rides it out longer than I expected. She must have good ground tackle.

2*d Wrecker*. We had better send off a boat to her, and persuade her to take a pilot, who can afterwards run her a-shore where we can best come at her.

3d Wrecker. I doubt whether the boat can live in this sea. But if there are any brave fellows willing to hazard themselves for the good of the public, and a double share—let them say Aye.

Several Wreckers. I, I, I, I.

The boat goes off, and comes under the ship's stern.

Spokesman. So ho, the Ship, ahoa!

Captain. Hulloa.

Sp. Would you have a pilot?

Capt. No, no!

Sp. It blows hard, and you are in danger.

Capt. I know it.

Sp. Will you buy a better cable? we have one in the boat here.

Capt. What do you ask for it?

Sp. Cut that you have, and then we'll talk about the price of this.

Capt. I shall do no such foolish thing. I have lived in your parish formerly, and know the heads of ye too well to trust ye: keep off from my cable there; I see you have a mind to cut it yourselves. If you go any nearer to it, I'll fire into you and sink you.

Sp. It is a damn'd rotten French cable, and will part of itself in half an hour. Where will you be then, Captain? you had better take our offer.

Capt. You offer nothing, you rogues, but treachery and mischief. My cable is good and strong, and will hold long enough to baulk all your projects.

Sp. You talk unkindly, Captain, to people who came here only for your good.

Capt. I know you come for all our *goods*, but, by God's help, you shall have none of them. You shall not serve us as you did the Indiamen.

Sp. Come, my lads, let's be gone. This fellow is not so great a fool as we took him to be.

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To David Hartley, Esq.

Dear Sir, *Passy, Feb.* 22, 1779.

I received your proposition for removing the stumbling-block. Your constant desires of peace ought to endear you to both sides; but this proposition seems to be naturally impracticable. We can never think of quitting a solid alliance made and ratified, in order to be in a state for receiving unknown

proposals of peace which may vanish in the discussion. The truth is we have no kind of faith in your government, which appears to us as insidious and deceitful as it is unjust and cruel. Its character is that of the *spider* in *Thomson*,

——————— *cunning, and fierce,*
Mixture abhorr'd!

Besides we cannot see the necessity of our relinquishing our alliance with France in order to a treaty, any more than of your relinquishing yours with Holland. I am, very affectionately, yours, N. A.[1]

To DAVID HARTLEY, ESQ. M. P.

DEAR SIR, *Passy, March* 21, 1779.

I received duly yours of the 2d instant. I am sorry you have had so much trouble in the affair of the prisoners. You have been deceived as well as we. No cartel ship has yet appeared, and it is now evident that the delays have been of design, to give more opportunity of seducing the men by promises and hardships to seek their liberty in engaging against their country. For we learn from those who have escaped, that there are persons continually employed in cajoling and menacing them, representing to them that we neglect them, that your government is willing to exchange them, and that it is our fault it is not done: that all the news from America is bad on their side; we shall be conquered and they will be hanged, if they do not accept the gracious offer of being pardoned on condition of serving the King, &c. A great part of your prisoners have been kept these six months on board a ship in Brest Road ready to be delivered: where I am afraid they were not so comfortably accommodated as they might have been in the French prisons. They are now ordered on shore. Doctor Bancroft has received your letter here. He did not go to Calais.

Knowing how earnestly and constantly you wish for peace, I cannot end a letter to you without dropping a word on that subject, to mark that my wishes are still in unison with yours. After the barbarities your nation has exercised against us, I am almost ashamed to own that I feel sometimes for her misfortunes and her insanities. Your veins are open, and your best blood continually running. You have now got a little army into Georgia, and are triumphing in that success. Do you expect ever to see that army again? I know not what General Lincoln or General Thomson may be able to effect against them; but if they stay through the summer in that climate, there is a certain General Fever that I apprehend will give

[1] North America.

a good account of most of them. Perhaps you comfort yourselves that our loss of blood is as great as yours. But as physicians say, there is a great difference in the facility of repairing that loss, between an old body and a young one. America adds to her numbers annually 150,000 souls. She therefore grows faster than you can diminish her, and will out-grow all the mischief you can do her. Have you the same prospects? But it is unnecessary for me to represent to you, or you to me, the mischiefs each nation is subjected to by the war: we all see clear enough the nonsense of continuing it; the difficulty is where to find sense enough to put an end to it. Adieu, my dear friend, and believe me, &c. B. FRANKLIN.

FROM DAVID HARTLEY, ESQ. TO DR. FRANKLIN.

MY DEAR FRIEND, *London, April 22, 1779.*

The bearer of this and some other papers (Mr. ——) is a very sensible and worthy gentleman, with whom I had the pleasure of contracting an acquaintance since the commencement of the American troubles, originally upon the business of the American prisoners. It is a satisfaction to me at all times to have found him a friend to the restoration of peace between the two countries. It has likewise been an additional satisfaction and confirmation to me in my own thoughts upon that subject, to find that his sentiments, I think upon most, or all of the subjects upon which we have conversed, have coincided with mine. We both seem possessed of the opinion, that some plan of opening a negociation, upon preliminaries, which each side might find to be a sufficient security to itself, might be practicable: and then, your sentiment, which you gave me in a letter some years ago might have its free scope and effect, viz. *A little time given for cooling might have excellent effects.*

The sentiments I have opened to you in my late letters for some months past, and which I have reduced in an inclosed paper, into a more specific shape, seem to me, upon very repeated reflection, to promise the fairest ground of good expectation. These propositions originate from myself, as a mediator: I have communications with both sides, but certainly no authority to make proposals from either; and perhaps neither side, if I were to put the propositions separately to each (being myself unauthorized) might give me positive consent. Each side separately might say No, from what is called political prudence; and yet each side might secretly wish that the offer could be made, with a *done first* from the other party. I think the proposition of a truce for five or seven years, leaving all things in the present dispute *in statu quo* must be advantageous to all parties, if it were only in consideration

that a general satisfactory peace to all parties *may* come among the *excellent effects of time given for cooling*. We can but fight it out at last. War never comes too late; wisdom may step in between. These matters have stolen upon us, and have arisen to great and formidable consequences from small and unexpected beginnings; but henceforward, we should know by experience what to expect. If the rage of war could but be abated, for a sufficient length of time for reason and reflection to operate, I think it would never revive. I cannot pretend to forecast the result of any negociation, but I think war would not revive; which is all that I want for my argument. Peace is a *bonum in se;* whereas the most favourable events of war are but relatively lesser evils: certainly they are evils: *mala in se*, not *bona in se.*

I hope that a cessation of hostilities would produce a renewal of reflection: but even to take the argument at the worst advantage, the two parties are at a cooling distance of three thousand miles asunder. If the flames of war could be but once extinguished, does not the Atlantic ocean contain cold water enough to prevent their bursting out again? I am very strongly of opinion that the two nations of Great Britain and North America, would accord to the proposition of a truce *for cooling*. I cannot say whether a British ministry would accord to it, because they wont tell me: nor can I say whether an American plenipotentiary would accord to it, because probably you will not tell me. I put myself into your hands however, when I tell you frankly I am of opinion that both would accord to it, if there could be a *done first* on either side, to bind the bargain fast. You have the odds of me in this matter, because you know one half of the question; and I cannot give you any proof on the other side, but only my own presumptive judgment, upon observation, and upon a course of reasoning in my own thoughts.

But for France—my judgment would be, that if the proposition of the proposed preliminaries should be agreeable to America, France would do very unhandsomely to defeat it by their refusal. I likewise think it the interest of France; because their interest leads them to go to a certain point, and no further. There is a disparity in the operation of the terms of the alliance on the part of France, and on the part of America. The more vigorously France interposes, the better for America; in proportion to their exertions they create, less or more, a diversion of the British force; this reasoning goes straight forward for America; but it is not so with France. There is a certain point, to France, beyond which their work would fail and recoil upon themselves; if they were to drive the British ministry totally to abandon the American war, it would become totally a French war. The events of

a twelvemonth past seem to bear testimony to this course of reasoning. The disadvantage upon the bargain, to America, is, that the efficacy of the French alliance to them, presupposes their continuance in the war. The demur to France is, that the liberation of their new ally recoils with double weight of the war upon themselves, without any ulterior points of advantage in view, as dependent upon that alliance. I think the interest of all parties coincides with the proposition of preliminaries. The proposed preliminaries appear to me to be just and equitable to all parties; but the great object with me is to come to some preliminaries; I could almost add, whatever those preliminaries might be, provided a suspension of arms for an adequate term of years were one, I think it would be ten thousand to one against any future renewal of the war. It is not necessary to enter at large into the reasons which induce me to think, that the British ministry as well as the American plenipotentiary would consent to the terms of the proposed preliminaries; for indeed I do not know that I am founded in that opinion with respect to either, but still I believe it of both. But what can a private person do in such a case, wishing to be a mediator for peace, having access to both parties, but equally uncertain of the reception of his mediation on either side? I must hesitate to take any public step, as by a proposition in parliament, or by any other means to drive the parties to an explanation upon any specific proposals: and yet I am very unwilling to let the session pass without some proposition, upon which the parties may meet, if they should be so inclined, as I suspect them to be. I have been endeavouring to feel pulses for some months, but all is dumb show. I cannot say indeed that I meet with any thing discouraging, to my apprehension, either as to equitableness or practicability of the proposition for preliminaries. If I could but simply receive sufficient encouragement that I should not run any hazard of obstructing any other practicable propositions, by obtruding mine, I should be very much satisfied to come forward, in that case, with mine, to furnish a beginning at least which might lead to peace.

There is nothing that I wish so much as to have an opportunity of seeing and conversing with you, having many things to say to you; but if that cannot yet happen, I have only to say, that whatever communication you may think proper to make to me which may lead to peace, you may be assured that I shall be most strenuous in applying it to that end. In all cases of difficulty in human life there must be confidence somewhere to enable us to extricate nations from the evils attendant upon national disputes, as they arise out of national passions, interests, jealousies, and points of honour. I am not sure whether the extreme caution and

diffidence of persons in political life be not the cause almost as frequently of the unnecessary protraction of the miseries of war, as of the final production of any superior good to any state. Peace *now* is better than peace a twelvemonth hence, at least by all the lives that may be lost in the meanwhile, and by all the accumulated miseries that may intervene by that delay. When I speak of the necessity of confidence, I would not have you to think that I trust to all professions, promiscuously, with confidence: my thoughts are free respecting all parties; and for myself if I thought it necessary for the end of attaining any additional confidence in your esteem to enable me to co-operate the more effectually towards the restoration of peace, there is nothing that I would wish you to be assured of but this; that no fallacious offers of insincerity, nor any pretexts for covering secret designs, or for obtaining unfair advantages, shall ever pass through my hands. Believe me truly to be, not only a lover of my country, but a sincere friend to peace, and to the rights of mankind; and ever most affectionately yours, D. HARTLEY.

Lord North consented to Mr. Hartley's proposition for endeavouring to procure from the American plenipotentiary or plenipotentiaries some opening that they would be willing to commence a parley, on propositions of peace between Great Britain and America, and supposed the terms which Mr. Hartley had in view would be something like a tacit cession of independence to America, with a truce for a certain term of years, to serve as a basis for a general treaty of accommodation and final settlement.

This last application (which was made on the 20th of April 1779) of Mr. Hartley's to Lord North, after several previous conferences on the subject, is the ground of the present confidential communication with Dr. Franklin, on the part of Mr. Hartley, who states to Dr. Franklin as he did to Lord North, that an auspicious beginning of a negociation is *dimidium facti.*

Mr. Hartley's ideas of the probable course of the negociation, would be to the following effect.

Five commissioners (or any three of them) to be appointed on the part of his Britannic Majesty to treat, consult, and agree upon the final settlement and pacification of the present troubles, upon safe, honourable, and permanent terms, subject to ratification by parliament.

That any one of the aforesaid commissioners may be impowered to agree as a preliminary, to a suspension of all hostilities by sea and land for a certain term of five or seven years.

That any one of the aforesaid commissioners be impowered to agree as a second preliminary, to suspend the operation and effect of any and all acts of parliament respecting America, for a certain term of five or seven years.

That it is expected, as a third preliminary, that America should be released free and unengaged from any treaties with foreign powers, which may tend to embarrass or defeat the present proposed negociation.

That a general treaty for negociation shall be set on foot as soon as may be after the agreement of the foregoing preliminaries.

N. B. A doubt seeming to arise from Lord North relative to the probability of any explanatory communication on the part of Dr. Franklin, Mr. Hartley expressed he thought it possible, that as a known friend to peace, he might be considered by Dr. Franklin as a depôt of any communications which may serve from time to time to facilitate the terms of peace: which therefore prevents this communication being considered as any direct overture from Lord North to Dr. Franklin, or from Dr. Franklin to Lord North, but as it is, merely, a mediatorial proposition of Mr. Hartley as a private person, for the purpose of bringing the parties to a parley.

To David Hartley, Esq. M. P.

Dear Sir, *Passy, May* 4, 1779.

I received your several favors, viz. one of April the 10th, one of the 20th and two of the 22d, all on the same day, but by different conveyances.

I need not repeat what we have each of us so often repeated, the wish for peace. I will begin by frankly assuring you, that though I think a direct, immediate peace, the best mode of present accommodation for Britain as well as for America, yet if that *is not* at this time practicable, and a truce *is* practicable, I should not be against a truce; but this is merely on motives of *general humanity*, to obviate the evils men devilishly inflict on men in time of war, and to lessen as much as possible the similarity of earth and hell. For with regard to particular advantages respecting the states I am connected with, I am persuaded it is theirs to continue the war, till England shall be reduced to that perfect impotence of mischief, which alone can prevail with her to let other nations enjoy, "*Peace, Liberty, and Safety.*" I think, however, that a *short* truce, which must therefore be an *armed* truce, and put all parties to an almost equal expence with a continued war, is by no means desirable.

But this proposition of a truce, if made at all, should be made to France at the same time it is made to America. They have each of them too much honour as well as too much sense, to listen separately to any propositions which tend to separate them from each other.

I will now give you my thoughts on your ideas of a negociation in the order you have placed them. If you will number them in your copy, you will readily see to which my observations refer, and I may therefore be more concise.

To the 1st. I do not see the necessity or use of five commissioners. A number of talkers lengthen discussions, and often embarrass instead of aiding a settlement. Their different particular views, private interests and jealousies of each other are likewise so many rubs in the way, and it sometimes happens that a number cannot agree to what each privately thinks reasonable, and would have agreed to, or perhaps proposed if alone. But this as the parties please.

To the 2d. The term of 21 years, would be better for all sides. The suspension of hostilities should be expressed to be between all parties at war. And that the British troops and ships of war now in any of the United States be withdrawn.

To the 3d. This seems needless, and is a thing that may be done or omitted as you please. America has no concern about those acts of parliament.

To the 4th. The reason of proposing this is not understood, nor the use of it, nor what inducement there can be for us to agree to it. When you come to treat with both your enemies, you may negociate away as much of these engagements as you can; but powers who have made a firm solid league evidently useful to both, can never be prevailed with to dissolve it, for the vague expectation of another *in nubibus;* nor even on the certainty *that* another will be proposed without knowing what are to be its articles. America has no desire of being free from her engagements to France. The chief is that of continuing the war in conjunction with her, and not making a separate peace: and this is an obligation not in the power of America to dissolve, being an obligation of *gratitude and justice* towards a nation which is engaged in a war on her account, and for her protection, and would be for ever binding whether such an article existed or not in the treaty, and though it did not exist, an honest American would cut off his right hand rather than sign an agreement with England contrary to the spirit of it.

To the 5th. As soon as you please.

If you had mentioned France in your proposed suspension of arms, I should immediately have shewn it to the minister, and have endeavoured to support that idea. As it stands I am in doubt whether I shall communicate your paper or not,

though by your writing it is so fair it seems as if you intended it. If I do, I shall acquaint you with the result.

The bill of which you send me a copy was an excellent one at the time, and might have had great and good effects, if instead of telling us haughtily that our humble petition should receive no answer, the ministry had received and enacted that bill into a law. It might have erected a wall of brass round England, if such a measure had been adopted when Fryer Bacon's brazen head cried out TIME IS! But the wisdom of it was not seen till after the fatal cry of TIME'S PAST! I am, my dear friend, &c. B. FRANKLIN.

To DAVID HARTLEY, ESQ. M. P.

DEAR FRIEND, *Passy, Feb. 2*, 1780.

It is some time since I procured the discharge of your Captain Stephenson. He did not call here in his way home. I hope he arrived safely and had a happy meeting with his friends and family.

I have long postponed answering your letter of the 29th June. A principal point in it on which you seemed to desire my opinion, was, the conduct you thought America ought to hold in case her allies should, from motives of ambition or resentment of former injuries, desire her to continue the war beyond what should be reasonable and consistent with her particular interests. As often as I took up your letter in order to answer it, this suggestion displeased me, and I laid it down again. I saw no occasion for discussing such a question at present, nor any good end it could serve to discuss it before the case should happen; and I saw inconveniences in discussing it. I wish therefore you had not mentioned it. For the rest, I am as much for peace as ever I was, and as heartily desirous of seeing the war ended, as I was to prevent its beginning; of which your ministers know I gave a strong proof before I left England, when in order to an accommodation, I offered at my own risque, without orders for so doing, and without knowing whether I should be owned in doing it, to pay the whole damage of destroying the tea at Boston, provided the acts made against that province were repealed. This offer was refused. I still think it would have been wise to have accepted it. If the congress have therefore entrusted to others rather than to me, the negociations for peace, when such shall be set on foot, as has been reported; it is perhaps because they may have heard of a very singular opinion of mine, that there hardly ever existed such a thing as a bad peace, or a good war: and that I might therefore easily be induced to make improper concessions. But at the same time they and you may be assured, that I

should think the destruction of our whole country, and the extirpation of our whole people, preferable to the infamy of abandoning our allies.

As neither you nor I are at present authorised to treat of peace, it seems to little purpose to make or consider propositions relating to it. I have had so many such put into my hands that I am tired of them. I will however give your proposal of a ten years' truce this answer: that though I think a solid peace made at once, a much better thing: yet if the truce is practicable and the peace not, I should be for agreeing to it. At least I see at present no sufficient reasons for refusing it, provided our allies approved of it. But this is merely a private opinion of mine, which perhaps may be changed by reasons that at present do not offer themselves. This, however, I am clear in, that withdrawing your troops will be best for you, if you wish a cordial reconciliation, and that the truce should produce a peace. To show that it was not done by compulsion, being required as a condition of the truce, they might be withdrawn before-hand, for various good reasons. But all this is idle chat, as I am persuaded that there is no disposition for peace on your side, and that this war will yet last many years. I know nothing and believe nothing of any terms offered unto Sir Henry Clinton.

The prisoners taken in the Serapis and Countess of Scarborough being all treated for in Holland, and exchanged there, I hope Mr. Brown's son is now safe at home with his father. It grieved me that the exchange there, which you may remember I immediately proposed, was so long delayed. Much human misery might have been prevented by a prompt compliance. And so might a great deal by the execution of parole promises taken at sea; but since I see no regard is paid to them in England, I must give orders to our armed ships that cruise in Europe to secure their prisoners as well as they can, and lodge them in French or Spanish prisons. I have written something on this affair to Mr Hodgson, and sent to him the second passport for a cartel to Morlaix, supposing you to be out of town. The number of prisoners we now have in France is not easily ascertained. I suppose it exceeds 100; but you may be assured that the number which may be brought over by the two cartels, shall be fully exchanged by adding to those taken by us as many as will make up the compliment out of those taken by the French, with whom we have an account since the exchange in Holland of those we carried in there. I wish therefore you would, as was proposed, clear your prisons of the Americans who have been so long confined there. The cartels that may arrive at Morlaix, will not be detained,

You may have heard that accounts upon oath have been taken in America by order of congress, of the British barbarities committed there. It is expected of me to make a school-book of them, and to have thirty-five prints designed here by good artists and engraved, each expressing one or more of the different horrid facts, to be inserted in the book, in order to impress the minds of children and posterity with a deep sense of your bloody and insatiable malice and wickedness. Every kindness I hear of done by an Englishman to an American prisoner, makes me resolve not to proceed in the work: hoping a reconciliation may yet take place. But every fresh instance of your devilism weakens that resolution, and makes me abominate the thought of a reunion with such a people. You, my friend, have often persuaded me, and I believed it, that the war was not theirs, nor approved by them. But their suffering it so long to continue, and the wretched rulers to remain who carry it on, makes me think you have too good an opinion of them. Adieu, my dear friend, &c. B. FRANKLIN.

FROM DAVID HARTLEY, ESQ. M.P. TO DOCTOR FRANKLIN.

MY DEAR FRIEND, *London, July* 17, 1780.

Inclosed I send you a copy of a conciliatory bill ' which was proposed in the house of commons on the 27th of last month. It was rejected.

Draught of a proposed Bill for Conciliation with America.

A Bill to invest the crown with sufficient powers to treat, consult, and finally to agree upon the means of restoring peace with the provinces of *North America.*

Whereas many unfortunate subjects of contest, have of late years subsisted between *Great Britain* and the several provinces of *North America* herein after recited, viz. *New Hampshire, Massachusett's Bay, Rhode-Island, Connecticut, New-York, New-Jersey, Pennsylvania, the Three lower Counties on Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina* and *Georgia,* which have brought on the calamities of war between *Great Britain* and the aforesaid provinces: to the end therefore that the farther effusion of blood may be prevented, and that peace may be restored, may it please your Majesty, that it be enacted, and be it enacted by the King's Most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the lords spiritual and temporal, and commons in this present parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same: that it shall and may be lawful for his Majesty by letters patent, under the great seal of *Great Britain,* to authorise and empower any person or persons, to treat, consult, and finally to agree with any person or persons, properly authorised on the part of the aforesaid provinces of *North America,* upon the means of restoring peace between *Great Britain* and the aforesaid provinces, according to the powers in this act contained.

And be it further enacted, that in order to facilitate the good purposes of this act, his Majesty may

You and I have had so much intercourse upon the subject of restoring peace between Great Britain and America, that I think there is nothing farther left to be said upon the subject. You will perceive by the general tenor of the bill that it proposes a general power to treat. It chalks out a line of negociation in very general terms. I remain in the sentiments which I ever have, and which I believe I ever shall entertain, viz. those of seeking peace upon honourable terms. I shall

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lawfully enable any such person or persons, so appointed by his Majesty's letters patent, as aforesaid, to order and proclaim a cessation of hostilities, on the part of his Majesty's forces by sea and land, for any time, and under any conditions or restrictions.

And be it further enacted, that in order to lay a good foundation for a cordial reconciliation and lasting peace, between *Great Britain* and the aforesaid provinces of *North America*, by restoring an amicable intercourse between the same, as soon as possible, his majesty may lawfully enable any such person or persons, so appointed by his Majesty's letters patent, as aforesaid, to enter into, and to ratify from time to time, any article or articles of intercourse and pacification, which article or articles, so entered into and ratified from time to time, shall remain in full force and effect for the certain term of ten years, from the first day of *August*, one thousand seven hundred and eighty.

Provided also, and be it further enacted, by the authority aforesaid, that in order to remove any obstructions which may arise to the full and effectual execution of any article or articles of intercourse and pacification, as before mentioned; that it shall, and may be lawful for his Majesty, by any instrument under his sign manual, countersigned by one or more of his Majesty's principal secretaries of state, to authorise and empower any such person or persons, so appointed by his Majesty's letters patent, as aforesaid, to suspend for the term of ten years, from the first day of *August*, one thousand seven hundred and eighty, the operation and effect of any act or acts of parliament, which are now in force, respecting the aforesaid provinces of *North America* or any clause or clauses, proviso or provisos, in any such act or acts of parliament contained; in as much as they, or any of them, may obstruct the full effect and execution of any such article or articles of intercourse and pacification, which may be entered into and ratified as before mentioned, between *Great Britain* and the aforesaid provinces of *North America*.

And be it further enacted, that in order to establish perpetual reconcilement and peace, between *Great Britain* and the aforesaid provinces of *North America*, it is hereby required, and be it enacted, that all or any article or articles of intercourse and pacification, which shall be entered into, and ratified, for the certain term of ten years as before mentioned, shall from time to time be laid before the two houses of parliament, for their consideration, as the perpetual basis of reconcilement and peace, between *Great Britain* and the aforesaid provinces of *North America*; and that any such article or articles of intercourse and pacification as before mentioned, when the same shall have been confirmed in parliament, shall remain in full force and effect for ever.

And be it further enacted, that this act shall continue to be in force until the thirty-first day of *December*, one thousand seven hundred and eighty-one,

always be ready and most desirous to conspire in any measures which may facilitate peace. I am ever, your most affectionate, D. HARTLEY.

To DAVID HARTLEY, ESQ.

Passy, June, 30, 1781.

I received my dear friend's kind letter of the 15th instant, and immediately communicated your request of a passport to M. le Comte de Vergennes. His answer which I have but just received, expresses an apprehension that the circumstance of his granting a passport to you, as you mention the purpose of your coming to be the discoursing with me on the subject of peace, might, considering your character, occasion many inconvenient reports and speculations; but that he would make no difficulty of giving it, if you assured me that you were authorized for such purpose by your ministry, which he does not think at all likely; otherwise he judges it best that I should not encourage your coming. Thus it seems I cannot have at present the pleasure you were so kind as to propose for me. I can only join with you in earnest wishes for peace, a blessing which I shall hardly live to see.

With the greatest esteem and respect, I am ever, dear Sir, &c. B. F.

FROM MR. WM. ALEXANDER TO DR. FRANKLIN.

MY DEAR SIR, *Paris, Dec.* 15, 1781.

I told you last time I had the pleasure of seeing you at Passy, that I would make a trip to London, but had no notion it would be so soon. On coming to town last evening, I found such pressing letters that I propose setting off this evening or to-morrow at latest. I would have called if possible to receive your commands, but as I am pinched in time must content myself with sending for them. The bearer will call for them an hour after receiving this letter.

I shall probably be interrogated about the dispositions in this country to peace. My own idea is that you seek only your independence, and that *this* country, were that secured, will be moderate in other matters, as the object of the war does not seem to be conquest. Let me know if this is proper language. I notice that a courtly argument has been used in parliament for continuing the continental war, that withdrawing would make you insolent and give France exclusive advantages—were it not proper that this were contradicted flatly? Any commissions you may have will be taken care of, and I shall be back, barring accidents, in three

weeks. Wishing you every thing that is good, I remain with equal esteem and respect, dear Sir, your most obedient humble servant, W. ALEXANDER.

ANSWER TO MR. ALEXANDER.

DEAR SIR, *Passy, Dec.* 15, 1781.

I thank you for informing me of your intended journey. You know so well the prevailing sentiments here, and mine in particular, that it is unnecessary for me to express them; and having never been believed on that side the water, it would be useless. I will say however, that I think the language you mention very proper to be held, as it is the truth; though the truth may not always be proper. Wishing you a good voyage, and happy return to your children, I am with great esteem, dear Sir, yours, &c. &c. B. FRANKLIN.

TO DAVID HARTLEY, ESQ. M. P.

[Sent by Mr. Alexander, with a Pamphlet].

MY DEAR FRIEND, *Passy, Dec.* 15, 1781.

I received your favour of September 26, containing your very judicious proposition of securing the spectators in the opera and play-houses from the danger of fire. I communicated it where I thought it might be useful. You will see by the inclosed that the subject has been under consideration here. Your concern for the security of life, even the lives of your enemies, does honour to your heart and your humanity. But what are the lives of a few idle haunters of play-houses compared with the many thousands of worthy men and honest industrious families butchered and destroyed by this devilish war! O! that we could find some happy invention to stop the spreading of the flames, and put an end to so horrid a conflagration! Adieu, I am ever, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

FROM DAVID HARTLEY, ESQ. TO DR. FRANKLIN.

MY DEAR FRIEND, *London, Jan.* 2, 1782.

I have received the favour of yours of the 15th of December by Mr. Alexander. I most heartily join with you in the wish that we could find some means to stop the spreading flames of this *devilish war*. I will not despair. The communications which he has imparted to me from you, have revived my hopes of peace. I laid them before the minister immediately. We are at a suspense for the present upon a very material preliminary. I did intend writing to you at the

present pause, that we might make our ground good as we go on, but an incident which has happened obliges me to do it without delay. For having had a most essential question transmitted to me from Lord North for explanation, when I would have applied to Mr. Alexander I could not hear of him; and now I find that he has left his hotel these four or five days, and his return uncertain, I must apply to you. I will state to you what has passed.

Upon my first interview with Mr. Alexander, he told me that the late events would make no difference in the prospect of peace; that America had no other wish than to see a termination of this war; that no events would make them unreasonable on that subject, which sentiments likewise your letter expresses; and that no formal recognition of independence would be required. I thought this a very fair opening, but the next point which he explained to me seemed to be still more material towards peace, viz. that America was disposed to enter into a separate treaty with Great Britain, and their allies were disposed to consent to it. I believe that it has been the unfortunate union of common cause between America and France, which has for the last three years turned aside the wish of the people of England for peace. I verily believe (so deep is the jealousy between England and France) that this country would fight for a straw to the last man, and the last shilling, rather than be dictated to by France. I therefore consider this as the greatest rub out of the way. I have often argued this point with you upon former occasions, having at all times foreseen that it would be the greatest rub in the road to peace, and I have often stated it to you as an act of *justice* due to America from her allies, not to drag her through a war of European resentments and jealousies beyond her original views and engagements, and moreover I think the separation of the causes in the negociation promises much the shortest road to a general peace.

Upon Mr. Alexander's opening thus much to me, I told him I would apply for the earliest opportunity of laying these matters before the minister. Accordingly on Friday morning (December 21) I applied through the means of the Earl of Guildford (father to Lord North) a nobleman of a most respectable character, advanced in years, and attached by every possible tie to a son now in a most arduous situation. I therefore requested the favour through his hands, as giving me the most conciliatory access to the minister, to whom I was preparing to make an application for peace. After the appointment was made with Lord North for Friday evening, I returned to Mr. Alexander to consider the specific manner and terms in which I should make my application. It had occurred to me from what Mr.

Alexander had stated to me, that the conciliatory bill[1] which I had moved in the last parliament, on June 27, 1780, would still serve as a foundation to proceed upon. I therefore carried it with me. He told me that he and you knew the sense of the bill very well, and that it would be entirely consonant to your sentiments, that I should state it to Lord North, as drawing an outline for negociation of peace. However to avoid all errors, I read the bill through to him, and explained the view of each clause, viz. the style of *provinces of North America*—a general phrase to avoid any term denoting dependence or independence. The truce—for an indefinite term. The articles of intercourse for ten years certain—to restore an amicable correspondence—and to abate animosities. The suspension of certain acts of parliament—to avoid every possible question of dependence or independence. And to finish the work by a ratification of each article of intercourse as agreed to, thereby to prevent all possible return of war. I compared the articles of intercourse for a short term, and their ratification into a permanent peace, to a well known mode of proceeding in the laws of England, by lease and release, from temporary to perpetual amity and peace. Upon these grounds I took my commission from him for Lord North, viz. the question of dependence or independence *sub silentio* —a separate treaty with America, and to state the conciliatory bill of June 1780, as the outline of negociation. I saw Lord North in the evening, and stated the foregoing propositions to him, as I have now stated them to you. After having stated the compromise *sub silentio* and the separate treaty, I left with Lord North the copy of the bill of June 1780, together with a paper entitled Conciliatory propositions, as explanatory of that bill (both inclosed with this). The next morning (viz: Saturday, December 22), I saw Mr. Alexander and reported to him what I had stated to Lord North, and shewed him a copy of the paper entitled conciliatory propositions. He told me that I had executed my commission perfectly to his intelligence of the matter. I should tell you that at the conclusion of my conversation with Lord North, we both settled jointly the result thus, " I recommend to your Lordship the propositions which I have had the honour of stating to you, as *general grounds of a proposed negociation leading towards peace, under liberal constructions.*" Lord North said in answer, " so I understand them."

Upon this footing matters rested for some days. On Sunday last (December 30) I received a message from Lord North, through the means of Lord Guildford, requesting an explanation of this point, viz. " Who is authorized to treat on the

[1] See Mr. Hartley's letter of July, 1780.

part of America? whether you or Mr. Adams, or both jointly, and whether the propositions above stated would be acknowledged as general grounds of negociation towards peace, by the person or persons authorized to treat, because it was necessary before he could lay a matter of so great importance before the cabinet council, that he should be entitled to say, These propositions and general outlines come to me from responsible and authorized persons." The moment I received the request of Lord North I agreed entirely with the necessity of an explanation on that head. I had partly expected such an enquiry, and it gave me satisfaction when it came, as I thought it the first reply towards a parley. If the propositions had not gained some attention it would have been of very little importance to have enquired whence they came. As to the caution itself, it appears to me not only prudent but indispensable. The forms of caution in such cases are the essentials of caution. I had determined on my own account before this message to have writ to you, that I might have received your sentiments directly from yourself without any other intervention, that we might proceed with caution and certainty in a matter of such infinite importance. This message has only quickened my dispatch. The two points of explanation requested, I take to be these; whether the outlines above recited are properly stated, always considering that they imply no farther than *general grounds of negociation towards peace, under liberal constructions;* and secondly by what authorized person or persons any answer on this subject would be accepted; in short a requisition of credentials preparatory to a formal answer which is so much the more necessary on the supposition of a favourable reception of the first hint towards negociation.

When I last saw Mr. A. viz. about four or five days ago, he had met with some desponding impressions, as if the ministry were indisposed to peace, and that things would not do, &c. He did not tell me upon what ground he had formed such apprehensions, however, lest he should have imparted any such by letter to you, I will state that point to you, because it may have infinite ill consequences to be too touchy on such suspicions. A premature jealousy may create the very evil it suspects. The ministry in this country are not every thing. The sense of the people when really expressed and exerted, would be most prevalent. Suppose then it were a proved point that every man in the ministry were in his heart adverse to peace. What then! withhold all overtures! By no means. I should advise the very contrary in the strongest manner. I should say, let the overtures be made so much the more public and explicit, by those who do wish for peace. It is the unfortunate state of things which has hitherto bound the cause of France to any

possible treaty with America, and which has thereby thrown a national damp upon any actual public exertions to procure a negociation for peace with America. I have the strongest opinion that if it were publicly known to the people of England that a negociation might be opened with America upon the terms above specified, that all the ministry together, if they were ill disposed to a man, would not venture to thwart such a measure. But why should it be supposed that the ministry to a man are ill disposed to a peace? Suppose them to be half and half, and the public wish and voice of the people in favour of negociation, it is evident on which side the balance would incline. But why should we seek to throw a damp prematurely upon any chance? Why presume even against any individual? I grant that it would be a bitter trial of humility to be brought to a formal recognition of independence at the haughty command of France, and I believe every part of the nation would proceed to every extremity before they would submit to that. But if that touchy point can be provided for *sub silentio*, and if the proposed treaty with America may be carried on free from controul by France, let us give the cause of peace a fair trial; at the worst we should but be where we were if we should fail. But why should we expect to fail when the greatest rub is removed by the liberty of entering separately into a treaty? I think it a most favourable event leading towards peace. Give us a truce with its concomitants, and a little time so given for cooling will have most excellent effects on both sides. Eternal peace and conciliation may then follow. I send this to you by the quickest dispatch, that we may bring this point to a fair issue before the meeting of parliament. God prosper the blessed work of peace. I am ever yours most affectionately, D. H.

CONCILIATORY BILL.

In the title and preamble of the bill the words *provinces of North America* are used as general words, neither implying dependence or independence.

Clause 1. *The Truce* is taken from the conciliatory act of 1778, and is indefinite as to the proposed duration of the truce. Under this clause it might be proposed to negociate three points, viz. the removal of the British troops from the thirteen provinces of North America, and connectedly with this article a stipulation for the security of the friends of the British government. The third article might be a stipulation that the respective parties during the continuance of the truce should not either directly or indirectly give assistance to the enemies of each other.

Clause 2. *Articles of intercourse and pacification.* Under this clause some arrangements might be settled for establishing a free and mutual intercourse, civil

and commercial, between Great Britain and the aforesaid provinces of North America.

Clause 3. *Suspension of certain acts of parliament.* By this clause a free communication may be kept open between the two countries, during the negociation for peace, without stumbling against any claim of rights which might draw into contest the question of dependence or independence.

Clause 4. *The ratification by parliament.* The object of this clause is to consolidate peace and conciliation step by step as the negociation may proceed, and to prevent, as far as possible, any return of war, after the first declaration of a truce. By the operation of this clause a temporary truce may be converted into a perpetual and permanent peace.

Clause 5. *A temporary act.* This clause creating a temporary act for a specific purpose of negociation in view, is taken from the act of 1778.

P. S. January 8, 1782.

Since writing this letter I have seen Mr. Alexander, and shall see him from time to time to communicate with him. I do not suppose I shall have an answer from Lord North 'till the preliminary points are so settled as to enable him to give an answer in form. Ministry might undoubtedly give a short negative if they thought proper, but I do not expect that. You may be assured that I have and shall continue to enforce every argument in the most conciliatory manner to induce a negociation. I am very sorry for Mr. A.'s confinement on his own account, and on that of his friends, and because probably in the future state of this business, his personal exertions may be very serviceable in the cause of peace. Every assistance and every exertion of mine will always be most heartily devoted to that cause. I have nothing farther to add, either upon my own reflections or from my subsequent conversations with Mr. A. to what I have stated in the foregoing letter. If we once make a good beginning upon the plan there stated, I should hope that such a negociation, founded on such principles, would promise fair to produce every salutary and pacific consequence in the event.

[*Answer to the foregoing.*]

To D. Hartley, Esq. M. P.

Dear Sir, *Passy, January* 15, 1782.

I received a few days since your favour of the 2d instant, in which you tell me, that Mr. Alexander had informed you "America was disposed to

enter into a separate treaty with Great Britain." I am persuaded that your strong desire for peace has misled you, and occasioned your greatly misunderstanding Mr. Alexander, as I think it scarce possible he should have asserted a thing *so utterly void of foundation.* I remember that you have, as you say, often urged this on former occasions, and that it always gave me more disgust than my friendship for you permitted me to express. But since you have now gone so far as to carry such a proposition to Lord North, as arising from us, it is necessary that I should be explicit with you, and tell you plainly, that I never had such an idea, and I believe there is not a man in America, a few English Tories excepted, that would not spurn at the thought of deserting a noble and generous friend for the sake of a truce with an unjust and cruel enemy. I have again read over your Conciliatory Bill, with the manuscript propositions that accompany it; and am concerned to find that one cannot give vent to a simple wish for peace, a mere sentiment of humanity, without having it interpreted as a disposition to submit to any base conditions that may be offered us rather than continue the war: for, on no other supposition could you propose to us a truce of ten years, during which we are to engage not to assist France while you continue the war with her. A truce too wherein nothing is to be mentioned that may weaken your pretensions to dominion over us, which you may therefore resume at the end of the term or at pleasure; when we have so covered ourselves with infamy by our treachery to our first friend, as that no other nation can ever after be disposed to assist us, how cruelly soever you might think fit to treat us. Believe me, my dear friend, America has too much understanding and is too sensible of the value of the world's good opinion to forfeit it all by such perfidy. The Congress will never instruct their Commissioners to obtain a peace on such ignominious terms; and though there can be but few things in which I should venture to disobey their orders, yet if it were possible for them to give me such an order as this, I should certainly refuse to act, I should instantly renounce their commission and banish myself for ever from so infamous a country.

We are a little ambitious too of your esteem; and as I think we have acquired some share of it, by our manner of making war with you, I trust we shall not hazard the loss of it by consenting meanly to a dishonourable peace.

Lord North was wise in demanding of you some authorized acknowledgment of the proposition from authorized persons. He justly thought it too improbable to be relied on, so as to lay it before the privy council. You can now inform him that the whole has been a mistake, and that no such proposition as that of a separate peace has been, is, or is ever likely to be made by me, and I believe by no other

authorized person whatever in behalf of America. You may farther, if you please, inform his Lordship, that Mr. Adams, Mr. Laurens, Mr. Jay and myself, have long since been empowered by a special commission to treat of peace, whenever a negociation shall be opened for that purpose: but it must always be understood that this is to be in conjunction with our allies, conformably to the solemn treaties made with them.

You have, my dear friend, a strong desire to promote peace, and it is a most laudable and virtuous desire. Permit me then to wish that you would, in order to succeed as a mediator, avoid such invidious expressions as may have an effect in preventing your purpose. You tell me that no stipulation for our independence must be in the treaty, because you "verily believe (so deep is the jealousy between England and France) that England would fight for a straw to the last man and the last shilling, rather than be *dictated to* by France." And again, that, "the nation would proceed to every extremity rather than be brought to a formal recognition of independence at the *haughty command* of France." My dear Sir, if every proposition of terms for peace that may be made by one of the parties at war is to be called and considered by the other as *dictating*, and a *haughty command*, and for that reason rejected with a resolution of fighting to the last man rather than agree to it, you see that in such case no treaty of peace is possible. In fact we began the war for independence on your government, which we found tyrannical, and this before France had any thing to do with our affairs; the article in our treaty whereby the "two parties engage that neither of them shall conclude either truce or peace with Great Britain without the formal consent of the other first obtained; and mutually engage not to lay down their arms until the independence of the United States shall have been formally or *tacitly* assured by the treaty or treaties that shall terminate the war," was an article inserted at our instance, being in our favour. And you see by the article itself, that your great difficulty may be easily got over, as a formal acknowledgment of our independence is not made necessary. But we hope by God's help to enjoy it, and I suppose we shall fight for it as long as we are able. I do not make any remarks on the other propositions, because I think that unless they were made by authority, the discussion of them is unnecessary and may be inconvenient. The supposition of our being disposed to make a separate peace, I could not be silent upon, as it materially affected our reputation and essential interests. If I have been a little warm on that offensive point, reflect on your repeatedly urging it, and endeavour to excuse me. Whatever may be the fate of our poor countries, let you and I die as we have lived, in peace with each other.

Assuredly I continue with great and sincere esteem, my dear friend, yours most affectionately, B. FRANKLIN.

FROM D. HARTLEY, ESQ. M. P. TO DR. FRANKLIN.

MY DEAR SIR, *London, Jan.* 24, 1782.

I received yours of the 15th instant, this day. I must take the earliest opportunity of setting you right in one mistake, which runs through your whole letter, and which to you, under that mistake, must be a very delicate point. You seem to apprehend that America has been stated in the proposition to Lord North, as "disposed to enter into a separate treaty with Great Britain;" but you meet the condition; viz. in the words immediately following, "*and that their allies were disposed to consent to it.*" There cannot possibly be any supposition of treachery to allies, in any proposition to which they may *consent*. A separate treaty with the *consent* of the allies of America, was the proposition communicated to me by Mr. Alexander, and which I laid before the minister, and which I reported back again to Mr. Alexander, in writing, when I shewed him the paper entitled "Conciliatory Propositions," which I took care to reduce to writing, with a view of avoiding mistakes: therefore I have not *misunderstood* Mr. Alexander. I have since seen Mr. A. many times, and he has always stated one and the same proposition, viz. that America was disposed to enter into a separate treaty because their *allies were disposed to consent that they should.* Therefore there cannot exist a suspicion of treachery. It occurred to me once whilst I was writing, to bar against that misconstruction: but, having specified the *consent of the allies of America*, in the same sentence, I could not conceive such a misconstruction to have been possible. You have mistaken another point greatly. You say, "a truce for *ten* years." There is not in the bill any such disposition or thought; on the contrary, it is specified in the enclosed paper, that it is kept *indefinite*, for the sole purpose of avoiding the suspicion which you have suggested. The truce may be for 20, or 50, or 100 years, (in my opinion the longer the better). But in any case, what I mean now to state is the *indefinite* term in the bill. The articles of intercourse are only proposed for ten years certain, just to strew the way with inviting and conciliatory facilities, in the hope that *a little time given for cooling* would confirm a perpetual peace. If I were permitted to be the mediator I should certainly propose the truce for 20 years: but if no more than ten years could be obtained, I would certainly not refuse such a ground of pacification and treaty. I refer you to several of my letters two or three years ago, for the justification of my sentiments on that head;

Another point: look at all my letters since 1778 and see if I have at any time suggested any breach of treaty or of honour: on the contrary, I think a faithless nation, if exterminated, would not deserve the pity of mankind. I speak of all that *I know* in the treaty between America and France, and what I think *reasonable* upon the case itself. If America is farther bound than we *know* of, they must abide by it. I speak to the apparent and public foundation of the treaty, article second with the provision of *tacitly* from article eight: and now I refer you to my letter to you, as long ago as April 10, 1779: "If beyond this essential and directed end, and upon grounds totally unconnected with that alliance, not upon motives of magnanimity *for the relief of an innocent people*, but from distinct and unconnected motives of private European sentiments, America should be dragged into the consequence of a general European war, she may apply to France the apostrophe of the poet, speaking in the person of Helen to Paris "*non hoc pollicitus tuæ.*" You see therefore that our sentiments have been uniform, and as I think reasonable, because I still remain in those sentiments. Suppose for instance (and you call it the case of a straw if you please) that Great Britain and France should continue the war for ten years, on the point of a commissary at Dunkirk, aye or no:—would it be *reasonable* or a *casus fœderis*, that America should be precluded from a separate treaty for ten years, and therefore involved in the consequential war, after the *essential and direct ends* of the treaty of February 6, 1778, were accomplished. As far as my judgment goes, upon the knowledge of such facts as are public, I should think it was neither *reasonable* nor a *casus fœderis*. This is the breviate of the argument, in which there is no thought or suggestion of any breach of faith or honour. I did conclude that France was disposed to give their *consent*, because Mr. Alexander informed me so, and because I thought it *reasonable* that France should *consent*, and *reasonable* that America should enjoy the benefit of that *consent*. I transmitted it to Lord North as a proposition temperate and pacific on the part of America, and consented to by their allies, and on no other ground did I transmit or propose it. All that your letter tells me, is, "that America will not break it with her allies, and that her commissioners will not entertain such a thought;" but give me leave to add, that they, as honest men, cannot disdain such a thought, more than I do, every honest man ought to disdain the office, or the thought of proposing a breach of faith to them. I have often told you, that such an office or such a thought shall never be mine. But you have not told me that France would not be *disposed* to *consent* to a separate treaty of peace, for that ally whose peace was the original declared object of the alliance. In the case supposed,

viz. of certain supposed or real punctilios between two proud and belligerent nations, which might possibly involve America, for years, in a war totally unconnected with the objects of the alliance. Besides, if any rubs should occur in the road to a general peace, France is too proud a nation to say, that beyond the *policy* of contributing to the separation of America from Great Britain in any contest of rivalship, they cannot meet their rivals in war, without the *assistance* of America. I cannot conceive that the minister of a great belligerent nation could entertain such a thought, as affecting their own sense of honour, or be so *unreasonable* to their allies, as to withhold consent to their peace, when *the essential and direct ends* of the alliance were satisfied. Observe, I do not contend against a general peace: on the contrary, I mean to recommend the most prudent means for producing it. But, as an anxious lover of peace, I feel terrors which dismay me, and I consider the dangers which may obstruct a general peace, arising from the pride and prejudices of nations, which are not to be controuled in their heat by arguments of reason or philosophy. Can any man in reason and philosophy tell me, why any two nations in the world are called natural enemies, as if it were the ordinance of God and nature. I fear it is too deeply engraved in the passions of man, and for that reason I would elude and evade the contest with such passions. I would strew the road to peace with flowers, and not with thorns. *Haughty*, and *dictating*, and *commands* are no words of mine; I abhor them, and I fear them. I would elude their force by gentle means, and step by step. In article eight, there are the following words: "By the treaty or treaties that shall terminate the war." Let us have one treaty begun, and I think the rest would follow. I fear when contending passions are raised lest we should lose all by grasping at too much.

January 25. I have just seen Mr. Alexander, and have talked the matter over with him. I send you a copy of his sentiments upon it, which, for the sake of avoiding farther mistakes, he committed to paper, and which, I think, justify me in saying that I understood from him, that France was *disposed to give their consent*, as he *explained* it to me, and as I explained it to the minister. He did not say, nor did I understand him to say, that he was *authorized* by the French ministry, or by any one else, to declare that France had bound herself to consent, or that any such requisition had been made to her; but that it was his opinion that France would consent, and that I might proceed upon that presumption, so far as to recommend overtures of negociation. Accordingly the phrase of my letter to you, is, that he *explained* to me, *that their allies were disposed to consent*. You see what his opinion is on this day; and as you have not told me that France will not consent,

the *reasonable* probability which still remains with me, for the hopes of opening an amicable treaty, remains as it did. I could not delay saying thus, by the very first mail, upon a point equally delicate to me, as well as to yourself. My dear friend, I beg of you not to think, either that you can be considered as capable of entertaining, or that I should be capable of suggesting, any unworthy or dishonourable propositions. If there has been any misunderstanding, it is now cleared up: and the ground for negociation remains open as before. I therefore still entertain my hopes. I am ever your affectionate, D. H.

Explanatory letter of Mr. ALEXANDER to Mr. HARTLEY, referred to in the preceding.

DEAR SIR,

As I had not the opportunity of seeing your correspondence at this time, I was unable to prevent the misunderstanding that seems to have arisen. There is no proposition of which I am more convinced, than that, "Nothing can be done without the concurrence of allies." But, as the chief obstruction towards an accommodation seemed to me to lie in the personal character of some who have great weight in this matter, and as the object of the war (the independence of America) seems, in the opinion of all men, to be secured, my own opinion was and still is, that there was so much wisdom and moderation where prejudice prevents us from seeing it, that, provided the ends of the war are accomplished to the satisfaction of all parties, they will be very ready to let us out of it, in the most gentle manner, by consenting equally that the business shall go on in one, two, or three separate deeds, as shall be most palatable here: and to doubt that our friends are desirous of finishing the contest, with the approbation of their allies, is to doubt their understanding. I am, with the greatest esteem, yours, &c.

W. ALEXANDER.

London, Jan. 25, 1782.

FROM DAVID HARTLEY, ESQ. M. P. TO DR. FRANKLIN.

MY DEAR FRIEND, *London, Feb.* 1, 1782.

I write to you one line by this mail only to tell you that I have seen the minister since I last wrote to you, and that he never did entertain the idea one moment of any propositions being thrown out on your part in the least degree inconsistent with the strictest honour and faith to the allies. I had no occasion to guard against or to explain any such thought, having at all times

conveyed the contrary to him in the most explicit terms. I transmit this to you for your full satisfaction. We have had much conversation on the subject of peace, which you may be sure I have most zealously endeavoured to enforce. *I should not do him justice if I did not add that I believe his wishes are for peace,* and that he gives the most serious attention to every argument, and to the suggestion of every practicable means on that subject. I have stated many things for his consideration, and for consultation with others, after which I shall see him again. I heartily wish the result may be favourable to the prospect of peace. I am ever, your affectionate, D. HARTLEY.

To DAVID HARTLEY, ESQ. M. P.

DEAR SIR, *Passy, Feb.* 16, 1782.

I received your favour of the 24th past. You have taken pains to rectify a mistake of mine relating to the aim of your letters. I accept kindly your replication, and I hope you will excuse my error, when you reflect that I knew of no consent given by France to our treating separately of peace, and that there has been mixed in some of your conversations and letters various reasonings, to show that if France should require something of us that was unreasonable, we then should not be obliged by our treaty to join with her in continuing the war. As there had never been such requisition, what could I think of such discourses? I thought as I suppose an honest woman would think, if a gallant should entertain her with suppositions of cases in which infidelity to her husband would be justifiable. Would not she naturally imagine, seeing no other foundation or motive for such conversation, that if he could once get her to admit the general principle, his intended next step would be to persuade her that such a case actually existed. Thus knowing your dislike of France, and your strong desire of recovering America to England, I was impressed with the idea that such an infidelity on our part would not be disagreeable to you; and that you were therefore aiming to lessen in my mind the horror I conceived at the idea of it. But we will finish here by mutually agreeing that neither you were capable of proposing nor I of acting on such principles.

I cannot however forbear endeavouring to give a little possible utility to this letter, by saying something on your case of Dunkirk. You do not see why two nations should be deemed natural enemies to each other. Nor do I, unless one or both of them are naturally mischievous and insolent. But I can see how enmities long continued, even during a peace, tend to shorten that peace, and to re-

kindle a war. That is when either party, having an advantage in war, shall exact conditions in the treaty of peace, that are goading and constantly mortifying to the other. I take this to be the case of your "commissioner at Dunkirk." What would be your feelings, if France should take, and hold possession of Portsmouth, or Spain of Plymouth after a peace, as you formerly held Calais, and now hold Gibraltar? Or on restoring your ports should insist on having an insolent commissioner stationed there, to forbid your placing one stone upon another by way of fortification? You would probably not be very easy under such a stipulation. If therefore you desire a peace that may be *firm* and durable, think no more of such extravagant demands. It is not necessary to give my opinion farther on that point, yet I may add frankly, as this is mere private conversation between you and me, that I do think a faithful ally, especially when under obligations for such great and generous assistance as we have received, should fight as long as he is able, to prevent (as far as his continuing to fight may prevent) his friends being compelled again to suffer such an insult.

My dear friend, the true pains you are taking to restore peace, whatever may be the success, intitle you to the esteem of all good men. If your ministers really desire peace, methinks they would do well to *impower* some person to make propositions for that purpose. One or other of the parties at war must take the first step. To do this belongs properly to the wisest. America being a novice in such affairs has no pretence to that character, and indeed after the answer given by Lord Stormont (when we proposed to him something relative to the mutual treatment of prisoners with humanity) *that the King's ministers received no applications from rebels, unless when they came to implore his majesty's clemency,* it cannot be expected that we should hazard the exposing ourselves again to such insolence. All I can say farther at present is that in my opinion your enemies do not aim at your destruction, and that if you propose a treaty you will find them reasonable in their demands, provided that on your side they meet with the same good dispositions. But do not dream of dividing us: you will certainly never be able to effect it.

With great regard and affection, I am ever, dear Sir, your most obedient and most humble servant, B. FRANKLIN.

FROM DAVID HARTLEY, ESQ. M. P. TO DR. FRANKLIN.

MY DEAR FRIEND, *Feb.* 28, 1782.

I have not as yet any thing to communicate to you. I have upon many occasions recommended the road to peace in the most earnest way. I

am not without hopes. I think I may venture to say that the arguments which I have stated have made an impression. I have not expected to receive the final answer from Lord North till after the parliamentary arrangements of the year are settled. I am just for three or four days in the country upon a little business but upon a furlough, as I may say, with the knowledge of Lord North, who during the budget week, cannot possibly want to see me. I have therefore taken that week for a little private business in the country, and if Lord N. should happen to wish to see me, my brother keeps watch, and is to send express for me. Public report will tell you that on Friday last there was a division in the house on an American question of 194 to 193. *I cannot answer for the dispositions of ministers, but in point of justice I ought to say, that I think, and as far as I can judge from the conferences which I have had, that I have found good dispositions towards peace.* I do not pledge myself, because I may be deceived; however that is my opinion; and I say thus much lest my silence should appear suspicious, and create alienation in other parties. I think I have seen good dispositions from the first commencement of my conferences on peace. My brother sends me word that Mr. Alexander is to return by the next mail, I therefore write this to send either by him or at least in the same packet. I have had much conversation with him, and he will tell you that I have done my utmost to serve the cause of peace. I will conclude this with a quotation which I have applied to another person in argument respecting peace,

> Consulere patriæ, parcere afflictis, ferâ cæde abstinere,
> Iræ tempus dare, orbi quietem, seculo pacem suo,
> Hæc summa virtus,—hac cœlum petitur viâ.

God bless you and prosper our pacific endeavours. I shall probably write again to you soon. Your affectionate, D. HARTLEY.

FROM MR. HARTLEY'S BROTHER, COLONEL HARTLEY, M. P. TO DR. FRANKLIN.

DEAR SIR, *Soho Square, Feb.* 28, 1782.

As I know how anxious my brother is to embrace every opportunity of expressing those sentiments of peace and universal philanthropy, which do you both so much honor, and of testifying his regard for yourself, I am sorry he is not returned to town before Mr. Alexander's departure. His absence from town has been occasioned by his being obliged to go into Gloucestershire for

some papers relating to family concerns, and as I am sure nothing on his part will be neglected, towards forwarding the great object of peace, I regret his absence the less, because it affords me an opportunity of saying how entirely I agree with him in opinion, and particularly in the respect and esteem I bear to a person who has so ardently wished to prevent the effusion of blood and the dreadful effects of this fatal and destructive war; a person who was, who would have been, permit me dear sir, to add, perhaps who is, (would the conduct of this country permit him with justice to be so) the real, the sincere friend of it.

That delusion, founded in falsehood, first made this country forget itself; its honour, and its justice, and pursue this accursed and destructive war is certain; happy will it be if the dereliction of it at last, shall show that its continuance has not already extinguished in the breast of America every former degree of friendship and affection. That reason is beginning to return, and this country to see its errors, I hope, from *a majority of the house of commons having yesterday agreed to a resolution against the American war, and I believe almost all the people of England are against the war.* I hope this will lay the foundation of peace between the two countries, and that the horrors of war may be succeeded by lasting and general tranquillity. The event is in the hand of Providence alone, but the endeavour to contribute to such blessed purposes is not only in the power of men, but the attempt carries with it its own reward. Should success not be the consequence, the consciousness of having exerted oneself in such a cause, will afford the most pleasing reflexions, and make a man repose in peace upon his pillow, whatever may be the distraction and confusion around him. You, sir, feel this in the greatest degree, and may those sentiments of justice, of freedom and liberality, which have marked your character, receive the reward they so justly merit, and by the happy return of a general peace, may such sentiments revive in each British and American breast to the mutual advantage of both countries. When I join my name to my brother's in such a wish, and in every expression of regard, esteem and friendship towards yourself, permit me to add, though far inferior in the power of contributing to that happy event to which his abilities, industry, and attention to public concerns, make him so equal, I cannot yield even to so near and dear a relation the palm of sincerity in and anxiety for promoting such a desirable purpose. I am with the greatest respect, dear Sir, your's most sincerely,

W. H. HARTLEY.

FROM EDMUND BURKE, ESQ. M. P. TO DR. FRANKLIN.

[In answer to one requesting him to negociate the exchange of Mr. Laurens for General Burgoyne.]

DEAR SIR,

Your most obliging letter demanded an early answer. It has not received the acknowledgment which was so justly due to it. But providence has well supplied my deficiences; and the delay of the answer has made it much more satisfactory than at the time of my receipt of your letter I dared to promise myself it could be. *I congratulate you, as the friend of America, I trust, as not the enemy of England, I am sure, as the friend of mankind, on the resolution of the house of commons, carried by a majority of nineteen at two o'clock this morning, in a very full house.* It was *the declaration of two hundred and thirty four; I think it was the opinion of the whole.* I trust it will lead to a speedy peace between the two branches of the English nation, perhaps to a general peace; and that our happiness may be an introduction to that of the world at large. I most sincerely congratulate you on the event. I wish I could say, that I had accomplished my commission. Difficulties remain. But as Mr. Laurens is released from his confinement, and has recovered his health tolerably, he may wait, I hope, without a great deal of inconvenience, for the final adjustment of his troublesome business. He is an exceedingly agreeable and honourable man. I am much obliged to you for the honour of his acquaintance. He speaks of you as I do; and is perfectly sensible of your warm and friendly interposition in his favour. I have the honour to be with the highest possible esteem and regard, dear Sir, your most faithful and obedient humble servant, EDMUND BURKE.

London, Charles Street, Feb. 28, 1782.

General Burgoyne presents his best compliments to you with his thanks for your obliging attentions towards him.

FROM WILLIAM ALEXANDER, ESQ. TO DR. FRANKLIN.

MY DEAR SIR, *Ostend, Sunday 9 at night, March 3*, 1782.

Although I expect to see you in a day or two after this comes to hand, I cannot let slip the opportunity of Mr. Moore, formerly with Mr. Williams, to inform you that the address in consequence of the question carried on Wednesday, was carried to the king by the whole opposition on Friday; that the answer, after the common place phrases and the repetition of the substance of the

address, was declaring his disposition to comply with it; and that of pushing the war with vigour against the ancient enemies of the kingdom, until a safe and honourable peace could be obtained which was his most earnest wish. This is the sense as delivered to me Friday evening by a member present. I have several letters for you which I will deliver on my arrival, and can give you a good deal of the sentiments of parties in England. I left London yesterday. You will have all our public news up to Thursday. The 1st payment 15 per cent was made on the new loan, Friday, and stock was got up at 2 per cent thereafter. Mr. Moore goes away just now, so have only time to subscribe myself with the most sincere esteem, dear Sir, your most obedient humble servant, W. ALEXANDER.

FROM DAVID HARTLEY, ESQ. M. P. TO DR. FRANKLIN.

MY DEAR FRIEND, *London, March* 11, 1782.

Mr. Digges who will deliver this to you informs me that having been applied to for the purpose of communicating with Mr. Adams on the subject of his commission for treating of peace, he is now setting out for Amsterdam, and that he intends afterwards to go to Paris to wait upon you. I understand the occasion to have arisen, by some mention having been made in parliament by General Conway of persons not far off having authority to treat of peace, which was supposed to allude to Mr. Adams, and some friends of his in London. Ministry were therefore induced to make some enquiries themselves. This is what I am informed of the matter. When the proposal was made to Mr. Digges he consulted me, I believe from motives of caution that he might know what ground he had to stand upon, but not in the least apprized that I had been in any degree in course of corresponding with you on the subject of negociation. As I had informed the ministry from you that other persons besides yourself were invested with powers of treating, I have nothing to say against their consulting the several respective parties. That is their own concern. I shall at all times content myself with observing the duties of my own conduct, attending to all circumstances with circumspection, and then leaving the conduct of others to their own reasons. I presume that ministry have only done what others would have done in their situation, to procure the most ample information that the case will admit. I rest contented to act in my own sphere, and if my exertions can be applied to any public good, I shall always be ready to take my part with sincerity and zeal. I am, my dear friend, your ever affectionate, D. HARTLEY.

FROM DAVID HARTLEY, ESQ. M. P. TO DR. FRANKLIN.

MY DEAR FRIEND, *London, March* 12, 1782.

Enclosed with this I transmit to you the public parliamentary proceeding respecting the American war. If you will compare these proceedings with some others in several of the counties of this kingdom about two years ago, you will at once see the reason why many persons who from principles of general and enlarged philanthropy do most certainly wish universal peace to mankind yet seem restrained in their mode of endeavouring to obtain that object. We must accommodate our endeavours to practicabilities, in the strong hope that if the work of peace was once begun, it would soon become general. Parliament having declared their sentiments by their public proceedings; a general bill will soon pass to enable administration to treat with America and to conclude. As to the sincerity of ministry that will be judged of by their conduct in any treaty. The first object is to procure a meeting of qualified and authorized persons. You have told me that four persons are empowered by a special commission to treat of peace. Are we to understand that each separately has power to conclude, or in what manner? The four persons whom you have mentioned are in four different parts of the world, viz. three of them in hostile states, and the fourth under circumstances very peculiar for a negociator. When I told Mr. Laurens that his name was in the commission I found him entirely ignorant of every circumstance relating to it. I understand that the ministry will be ready to proceed towards opening a negociation as soon as the bill shall pass, and therefore it is necessary to consult of time, and place and manner and persons on each side. The negociation itself will speak the rest. I have been informed that some gentlemen in this country (not in administration) have lately entered into a correspondence with Mr. Adams relating to his commission of treating for peace, and that their previous enquiries having been spoken of in public, the ministry have been induced to make some enquiry themselves from Mr. Adams on that subject. In whatever way a fair treaty may be opened, by whomsoever or with whomsoever, I shall heartily wish good success to it for the common good and peace of mankind. I know these to be your sentiments, and I am confident that they will ever remain so, and hope that you will believe the same of me. I am ever, your most affectionate, D. HARTLEY.

Copy from the printed votes of the Commons 27 Feb. 1782.

Resolved. That it is the opinion of this house that the farther prosecution of offensive war on the continent of *North America*, for the purpose of reducing the

revolted colonies to obedience by force, will be the means of weakening the efforts of this country against her *European* enemies, tends, under the present circumstances, dangerously to increase the mutual enmity so fatal to the interests both of *Great Britain* and America, and by preventing an happy reconciliation with that country, to frustrate the earnest desire graciously expressed by his Majesty to restore the blessings of public tranquillity.

Resolved. That an humble address be presented to his Majesty, that the further prosecution of offensive war on the continent of North America, tends, &c. &c.

March 4. Mr. Speaker reported to the house, that the house attended his Majesty on Friday last with their address; to which his Majesty was pleased to give his most gracious answer:

Gentlemen of the House of Commons,

There are no objects nearer my heart than the ease, happiness, and prosperity of my people.

You may be assured that, in pursuance of your advice, I shall take such measures as shall appear to me most conducive to the restoration of harmony between Great Britain and the revolted colonies, so essential to the prosperity of both; and that my efforts shall be directed in the most effectual manner against our *European* enemies, until such a peace can be obtained as shall consist with the interests and permanent welfare of my kingdoms.

Resolved, nemine contradicente,

That an humble address be presented to his Majesty, to return his Majesty the thanks of this house, for his most gracious answer to their address presented to his Majesty on Friday last, and for the assurances his Majesty has most graciously been pleased to give them of his intention in pursuance of the advice of this house, to take such measures as shall appear most conducive to the restoration of harmony between Great Britain and the revolted colonies; and that his efforts shall be directed in the most effectual manner against our European enemies, until such a peace can be obtained as shall consist with the permanent welfare and prosperity of his kingdoms: this house being convinced that nothing can, in the present circumstances of this country, so essentially promote those great objects of his Majesty's paternal care for his people, as the measures which his faithful commons have most humbly recommended to his Majesty.

Ordered, that the said address be presented &c.

Resolved. That, after the solemn declaration of the opinion of this house, in

their humble address presented to his Majesty on Friday last, and his Majesty's assurance of his gracious intention in pursuance of their advice, to take such measures as shall appear to his Majesty to be most conducive to the restoration of harmony between Great Britain and the revolted Colonies, so essential to the prosperity of both, this House will consider as *enemies to his Majesty and this country*, all those who shall endeavour to frustrate his Majesty's paternal care for the ease and happiness of his people, by advising, or by any means attempting, the farther prosecution of offensive war on the continent of *North America*, for the purpose of reducing the revolted Colonies to obedience by force.

FROM DAVID HARTLEY, ESQ. TO DR. FRANKLIN.

MY DEAR FRIEND, *London, March* 21, 1782.

You will have heard before this can reach you, that Lord North declared yesterday in the House of Commons that his Majesty intended to change his ministers. The House is adjourned for a few days to give time for the formation of a new ministry. Upon this occasion therefore I must apply to you to know whether you would wish me to transfer the late negociation to the successors of the late ministry; in these terms; (vide yours to me of January 15, 1782) viz. "that you are empowered by a special commission to treat of peace whenever a negociation for that purpose shall be opened. That it must always be understood that it is to be in conjunction with your allies conformable to the solemn treaties made with them. That the formal acknowledgment of the Independence of America is not made necessary." And may I add that upon these terms you are disposed to enter into a negociation. It is not known who will succeed the late ministry, but from the circumstances which preceded its dissolution we are to hope that they will be disposed to enter into a negociation of peace upon fair and honourable terms. I have no doubt that there were some persons in the late ministry of that disposition.

I told you in my last letters to you of the 11th and 12th instant, that I had received information, whilst I was in the course of correspondence with the ministry myself on the subject of peace, that some part of the ministry were transmitting some communications or enquiries upon that subject with Mr. Adams, unknown to me. I had informed the ministry from you the names of the four persons empowered to treat. I saw the minister upon the occasion (I should now call him the late minister). I took the liberty of giving him my opinion upon the matter itself. So far as it related personally to me, I expressed myself fully to him that there

was no occasion that such a step should have been taken unknown to me, for that I was very free to confess that if they thought my partiality towards peace was so strong that they could drive a better bargain through another channel, I could not have any right of exclusion upon them. I relate this to you because I would wish to have you make a corresponding application to your own case. If you should think *that my strong desire for peace*, although *most laudable and virtuous in itself, should mislead me*, and that my being so as you may suppose misled, may be of any prejudice to the cause committed to your trust, I desire by no means to embarrass your free conduct, by any considerations of private or personal regard to myself. Having said thus much, I will now add that I am not unambitious of the office of a peace maker, that I flatter myself the very page which I now am writing will bear full testimony from both sides of the impartiality of my conduct. And I will add once more what I have often said and repeated to each side, viz. that no fallacy or deception, knowing or suspecting it to be such, shall ever pass through my hands.

Believe me I sympathize most cordially and sincerely with you in every anxiety of yours for peace. I hope things are tending (although not without rubs) yet in the main to that end. Soon! as soon as the course of human life may be expected to operate on the great scale and course of national events, or rather in the creation and establishment of a new world. I am sometimes tempted to think myself in patient expectation the elder sage of the two. I say the elder, not the better. Yours, &c. D. H.

From Mr. T. Digges to Dr. Franklin.

Sir, *Amsterdam, March* 22, 1782.

I left England a few days back, and until my conversation and some consultations with Mr. Adams on a matter which will be mentioned to you by him, and more particularly explained in this letter, my determination was to have seen you, as well on that business as on a matter of much consequence to my private reputation. I feel the disadvantages under which I labour when writing to you on a matter which cannot be explained or cleared up but by personal conversation. I do not give up my intended purpose of personally speaking to you, but it being found better and more convenient to my purpose to return immediately hence to England, and from thence to Paris, in preference of going first to Paris, it must be unavoidably delayed for some days.

It would take up more than the length of a letter to explain the whole opening and progression of a matter I am here upon, which was and is meant to be jointly communicated to you with Mr. Adams; I will therefore take the liberty to give you an abbreviation of it in as few words as I can.

About a fortnight ago a direct requisition from ministry, through Lord Beauchamp, was made to Mr. R. Penn to know if he could ascertain *that any person or persons in Europe were commissioned by Congress to treat for peace, whether they were* NOW *willing to avail themselves of such commission, and of the present sincere disposition in ministry to treat, and whether they would receive an appointed commissioner to speak for a truce, and mention a place for the meeting, &c.*

Mr. Penn's referring Lord Beauchamp to me, as knowing the nature of Mr. Adams's former commission, was the sole cause of my being privy to or a party in the matter. I had various meetings with Lord Beauchamp in company with Mr. Penn on the subject; the particular memorandums of which, and Lord B.'s statement of what the ministry wanted to obtain, together with every other circumstance relative to the matter, I regularly consulted Mr. Laurens and Mr. D. Hartley upon; and the result was my taking the journey hither, and to Paris in order to put the questions (as they are before stated from Lord B. to Mr. Penn) and to bring an answer thereto. I am well convinced by Lord Beauchamp's pledge of his personal honour, as well as from Mr. Hartley's telling me he knew the matter to come directly from Lord North (for he visited him more than once to ascertain the fact) that it is a serious and sincere requisition from ministry, and that they will immediately take some steps to open a treaty provided I go back with assurances that there is a power vested in Americans in Europe to treat and conclude, and that they are willing to avail themselves of such power when properly applied to.

I have stated the whole transaction to Mr. Adams, read every memorandum I had made, informed him of every circumstance I knew, and when I put the questions (as they are before stated from Lord B. to Mr. Penn) he replied, "that there were certainly commissioners in Europe, of which body he was one, who had powers to treat and conclude upon peace; that he believed them willing to enter into such a treaty, provided a proper offer was made; but that no questions now or to be made in future could be answered by him without previously consulting his colleagues, and afterwards acquainting the ministers of the belligerent powers thereof." Mr. Adams recommended that any future questions might be made

directly to you, for that the present, as well as any subsequent propositions would be immediately communicated to you and Mons. de Vergennes.

His answers to my questions were nearly what I foretold and expected, and is substantially what Lord Beauchamp seemed so anxious to procure. When I relate this answer to his Lordship my business will be finished in that quarter. I will here explain to you my only motive for being a messenger from him whom I had never known or been in company with before. It will enable me to say, I have done one favour for you, and I claim of you another, viz. to obtain a restoration of my papers from Lord Hillsborough's office, which were in a most illegal and unjustifiable manner seized from me near a twelvemonth ago, and are yet withheld notwithstanding the personal applications for them from Lord Coventry, Lord Nugent, and Mr. Jackson, each of whom have explained the injury and very extraordinary mischief the want of my papers for so long a time has and is now doing me.

On my first conversation with Mr. Adams I had concluded to go to you, partly by his advice to do so; but as the expence of two journies where one may serve is of some import to me, and from supposing your answer would be substantially the same as that from Mr. Adams, I have thought it better to go back immediately to London, and then set out for Paris with the probability of being able to bear my papers.

I will take the liberty to trouble you with another letter if any thing occurs on my arrival in London. I am to leave this with Mr. Adams for forwardance; and for the present I have only to beg a line acknowledging the receipt of it. If your letter is put under *a cover to Mr. Stockdale, Bookseller, Piccadilly, London,* it will the more readily get to hand. I am, with great respect, Sir, your very obedient servant,

T. DIGGES.

Ostend, 26th March.

On my last visit to Mr. Adams, Friday evening, to explain to him the substance of the foregoing letter, and ask his forwardance of it to you, we had some farther conversation on the matter, the ultimate conclusion of which was, that it was thought better I did not send the annexed letter to you, or mention my business with him until my going in person from England. Mr. Adams's reasons were these. That if I made the communication *then* he should be necessitated to state the matter in a long letter to you and others of his colleagues; that the matter as it then stood was not of such importance but he could save

himself the trouble of the explanation; and that as he recommended any future questions or applications to be made directly to you, your situation making it more convenient sooner to inform the French court thereof, he thought my letter had better be postponed, and the substance of it given in person as soon as I could possibly get from London to Paris. I acquiesced, though reluctantly, and having thought much on the matter on my journey hither, I have at length determined to forward the foregoing letter with this postscript, and at the same time to inform Mr. Adams of my exact feelings on the matter, viz. that my wishes and intentions when I left England were to see, and make known the matter to you; that through Mr. Hartley or some other channel you must hear that I had been at Amsterdam, and my seemingly turning my back upon you might be thought oddly of; and finally that I could not answer for carrying the inclosure from Mr. Hartley back to England, not knowing the consequence it might be of. I hope and think I have done right in this matter. The purpose for my moving in the business I went to Mr. A. upon, has, I own, been with a double view of serving myself in a matter of much consequence to me, for after delivering the explanations I carry, I can with some degree of right and a very great probability of success, claim as a gratuity for the trouble and expence I have been at, the restoration of my papers; the situation of which I have already explained to Lord Beauchamp, in order to get him to be a mover for them, and I have very little doubt that a few days will restore them to me, and give me an opportunity to speedily speak to you on a matter which gives me much uneasiness, vexation, and pain. Excuse the hurry in which I write, for I am very near the period of embarkation. Paul Wentworth embarked this day for England, I trod on his heels chief of the way from the Hague which he left suddenly. General Faucit is on his road hence to Hanover.

FROM HIS EXCELLENCY J. ADAMS, ESQ. TO DR. FRANKLIN.

SIR, *The Hague, March* 26, 1782.

One day last week, I received at Amsterdam a card from Digges, inclosing two letters to me, from Mr. David Hartley. The card desired to see me, upon business of importance; and the letters from Mr. Hartley contained an assurance, that to his knowledge, the bearer came from the highest authority. I answered the card, that in the present situation of affairs here and elsewhere, it was impossible for me to see any one from England without witness; but if he were willing to see me in presence of Mr. Thaxter, my Secretary, and that I should communicate whatever he should say to me to Dr. Franklin, and the

Compte de Vergennes, I would wait for him at home at ten o'clock; but that I had rather he should go to Paris without seeing me, and communicate what he had to say to Dr. Franklin, whose situation enabled him to consult the Court without loss of time. At ten however he came, and told me a long story about consultations with Mr. Penn, Mr. Hartley, Lord Beauchamp, and at last Lord North, by whom he was finally sent, to enquire of me, if I or any other had authority to treat with Great Britain of a truce. I answered that "I came to Europe with full powers to make peace, that those powers had been announced to the public upon my arrival, and continued in force until last summer, when Congress sent a new commission, containing the same powers to four persons, whom I named: that if the King of England were my father, and I the heir apparent to his throne, I could not advise him ever to think of a truce, because it would be but a real war, under a simulated appearance of tranquillity, and would end in another open and bloody war, without doing any real good to any of the parties."

He said that "the ministry would send some person of consequence over, perhaps General Conway, but they were apprehensive, that he would be ill-treated or exposed." I said, "that if they resolved upon such a measure, I had rather they would send immediately to Dr. Franklin because of his situation near the French court. But there was no doubt, if they sent any respectable personage properly authorized, who should come to treat honourably, he would be treated with great respect. But that if he came to me, I could give him no opinion upon any thing without consulting my colleagues, and should reserve a right of communicating every thing to them, and to our allies."

He then said that "his mission was finished. That the fact to be ascertained was simply, that there was a commission in Europe to treat and conclude: but that there was not one person in Great Britain who could affirm or prove that there was such a commission, although it had been announced in the gazettes."

I desired him, and he promised me, not to mention Mr. Laurens to the ministry without his consent (and without informing him that it was impossible he should say any thing in the business, because he knew nothing of our instructions) because, although it was possible that his being in such a commission might induce them to release him, yet it was also possible it might render them more difficult, concerning his exchange.

The picture he gives of the situation of things in England is gloomy enough for them. The distresses of the people, and the distractions in administration and parliament, are such as may produce any effect almost that can be imagined.

The only use of all this I think is to strike decisive strokes at New York and Charlestown. There is no position so advantageous for negociation, as when we have all an enemy's army prisoners. I must beg the favour of you, Sir, to send me, by one of the Count de Vergennes's couriers to the Duc de la Vauguion, a copy in letters of your peace instructions. I have not been able to decypher one quarter part of mine. Some mistake has certainly been made.

Ten or eleven cities of Holland have declared themselves in favour of American Independence, and it is expected that to-day or to-morrow, this province will take the decisive resolution of admitting me to my audience. Perhaps some of the other provinces may delay it for three or four weeks. But the Prince has declared, that he has no hopes of resisting the torrent, and *therefore* that he shall not attempt it. The Duc de la Vauguion has acted a very friendly and honourable part in this business, without, however, doing any ministerial act in it. With great respect, I have the honour to be, Sir, your most obedient and most humble servant,

J. ADAMS.

To ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON,

Secretary for Foreign Affairs.

SIR, *Passy, March* 30, 1782.

The newspapers which I send you by this conveyance, will acquaint you, with what has since my last passed in parliament. You will there see a copy of the Bill brought in by the Attorney-General, for empowering the King to make peace with the Colonies. They still seem to flatter themselves with the idea of dividing us; and rather than name the Congress they empower him generally to treat with *any body or bodies of men, or any person or persons, &c.* They are here likewise endeavouring to get us to treat separately from France, at the same time they are tempting France to treat separately from us, equally without the least chance of success. I have been drawn into a correspondence on this subject, which you shall have with my next. I send you a letter of Mr. Adams's just received, which shows also that they are weary of the war, and would get out of it if they knew how. They had not then received certain news of the loss of St. Christopher's, which will probably render them still more disposed to peace. I see that a bill is also passing through the House of Commons for the exchange of American prisoners, the purport of which I do not yet know.

In my last I promised to be more particular with respect to the points you mentioned as proper to be insisted on in the treaty of peace. My ideas on those points

I assure you, are full as strong as yours. I did intend to have given you my reasons for some addition, and if the treaty were to be held on your side the water, I would do it: otherwise it seems on second thoughts to be unnecessary, and if my letter should be intercepted may be inconvenient. Be assured I shall not willingly give up any important right or interest of our country, and unless this campaign should afford our enemies some considerable advantage, I hope more may be obtained than is yet expected.

Our affairs generally go on well in Europe. Holland has been slow, Spain slower, but time will I hope smooth away all difficulties. Let us keep up not only our courage but our vigilance, and not be laid asleep by the pretended half peace the English make with us without asking our consent. We cannot be safe while they keep armies in our country. With great esteem I have the honour to be, Sir, your most obedient and most humble servant, B. FRANKLIN.

To J. ADAMS, Esq.

SIR, *Passy, March* 31, 1782.

I received yours of the 10th instant, and am of opinion with you, that the English will evacuate New York and Charlestown, as the troops there after the late resolutions of parliament must be useless, and are necessary to defend their remaining islands, where they have not at present more than 3000 men. The prudence of this operation is so obvious, that I think they can hardly miss it; otherwise I own, that considering their conduct for several years past, it is not reasoning consequentially to conclude they will do a thing, because the doing it is required by common sense.

Yours of the 26th is just come to hand. I thank you for the communication of Digges's message. He has also sent me a long letter, with two from Mr. Hartley. I shall see M. de Vergennes to-morrow and will acquaint you with every thing material that passes on the subject. But the ministry by whom Digges pretends to be sent being changed, we shall by waiting a little see what tone will be taken by their successors. You shall have a copy of the instructions by the next courier. I congratulate you cordially on the progress you have made among those slow people. Slow however as they are, Mr. Jay finds his[1] much slower. By an American, who goes in about ten days to Holland, I shall send you a packet of

[1] The Spaniards.

correspondence with Mr. Hartley, though it amounts to little. With great esteem, I have the honour to be your Excellency's most obedient and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

To DAVID HARTLEY, Esq. M. P.

DEAR SIR, *Passy, March* 31, 1782.

I have just received your favours of March 11 and 12, forwarded to me by Mr. Digges, and another of the 21st per post. I congratulate you on the returning good disposition of your nation towards America, which appears in the resolutions of parliament, that you have sent me: and I hope the change of your ministry will be attended with salutary effects. I continue in the same sentiments expressed in my former letters; but as I am but one of five in the commission, and have no knowledge of the sentiments of the others, what has passed between us is to be considered merely as private conversation. The five persons are Messrs. Adam, Jay, Laurens, Jefferson and myself; and in case of the death or absence of any, the remainder have power to act and conclude. I have not written to Mr. Laurens, having constantly expected him here, but shall write to him next post; when I shall also write more fully to you, having now only time to add, that I am ever with great esteem and affection, dear Sir, your most obedient and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

To DAVID HARTLEY, Esq. M. P.

MY DEAR FRIEND, *Passy, April 5*, 1782.

I wrote a few lines to you the 31st past, and promised to write more fully. On perusing again your letters of the 11th, 12th, and 21st. I do not find any notice taken of one from me dated February 16. I therefore now send you a copy made from it in the press. The uncertainty of free transmission discourages a free communication of sentiments on these important affairs; but the inutility of discussion between persons, one of whom is not authorized, but in conjunction with others, and the other not authorized at all, as well as the obvious inconveniences that may attend such previous handling of points, that are to be considered when we come to treat regularly, are with me a still more effectual discouragement, and determine me to waive that part of the correspondence. As to Digges, I have no confidence in him, nor in any thing he says or may say of his being sent by ministers. Nor will I have any communication with him, except in receiving and considering the justification of himself which he pretends he shall be

able and intends to make, for his excessive drafts on me on account of the relief I ordered to the prisoners, and his embezzlement of the money. You justly observe in yours of the 12th, that the first object is to procure a "meeting of qualified and authorized persons," and that you "understand ministry will be ready to proceed towards opening a negociation as soon as the bill shall pass, and therefore it is necessary to consult of time and place, and manner and persons on each side." This you wrote while the old ministry existed. If the new have the same intentions, and desire a general peace, they may easily discharge Mr. Laurens from those engagements which make his acting in the commission improper, and except Mr. Jefferson who remains in America and is not expected here, we the Commissioners of Congress can be easily got together ready to meet yours at such place as shall be agreed to by all the powers at war, in order to form the treaty. God grant that there may be wisdom enough assembled to make, if possible, a peace that shall be perpetual, and that the idea of any nations being natural enemies to each other may be abolished for the honour of human nature.

With regard to those who may be commissioned from your government, whatever personal preferences I may conceive in my own mind, it cannot become me to express them. I only wish for wise and honest men. With such, a peace may be speedily concluded. With contentious wranglers the negociation may be drawn into length and finally frustrated.

I am pleased to see in the votes and parliamentary speeches, and in your public papers, that in mentioning America the word *reconciliation* is often used. It certainly means more than a mere peace. It is a sweet expression. Revolve in your mind, my dear friend, the means of bringing about this *reconciliation*. When you consider the injustice of your war with us, and the barbarous manner in which it has been carried on, the many suffering families among us from your burning of towns, scalping by savages, &c. &c. will it not appear to you, that though a cessation of the war may be a peace, it may not be a reconciliation? Will not some voluntary acts of justice and even of kindness on your part have excellent effects towards producing such a *reconciliation?* Can you not find means of repairing in some degree those injuries? You have in England and Ireland twelve hundred of our people prisoners, who have for years bravely suffered all the hardships of that confinement rather than enter into your service to fight against their country. Methinks you ought to glory in descendants of such virtue. What if you were to begin your measures of *reconciliation* by setting them at liberty? I know it would procure for you the liberty of an equal number of your people, even without a

previous stipulation; and the confidence in our equity with the apparent good will in the action, would give very good impressions of your change of disposition towards us. Perhaps you have no knowledge of the opinions lately conceived of your king and country in America; the enclosed copy of a letter will make you a little acquainted with them, and convince you how impossible must be every project of bringing us again under the dominion of such a sovereign. With great esteem, I am, dear Sir, your most obedient and most humble servant, B. FRANKLIN.

TO THE HON. ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON, ESQ.

SIR, *Passy, April* 8, 1782.

Since my last an extraordinary revolution has taken place in the court of England. All the old ministers are out, and the chiefs of the opposition are in their places. The newspapers that I send will give you the names as correctly as we yet know them. Our last advices mention their kissing hands; but they had yet done nothing in their respective offices, by which one might judge of their projected measures; as whether they will ask a peace of which they have great need, the nation having of late suffered many losses, men grown extremely scarce, and Lord North's new taxes proposed as funds for the loan meeting with great opposition; or whether they will strive to find new resources and obtain allies to enable them to please the king and nation by some vigorous exertions against France, Spain, and Holland. With regard to America having while in opposition carried the vote for making no longer an offensive war with us, they seem to have tied their own hands from acting against us. Their predecessors had been tampering with this court, for a separate peace. The king's answer gave me, and will give you great pleasure. It will be sent to M. de la Luzerne and by him be communicated to congress. None of their attempts to divide us met with the least encouragement: and I imagine the present set will try other measures.

With great esteem I have the honour to be &c. B. FRANKLIN.

TO THE HON. ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON, ESQ.

SIR, *Passy, April* 12, 1782.

Being at court on Tuesday, I learnt from the Dutch minister, that the new English ministry have offered, through the minister of Russia, a cessation of arms to Holland, and a renewal of the treaty of 1674. M. du Berkenroode seemed to be of opinion that the offer was intended to gain time, to obstruct the concert of operations with France for the ensuing campaign, and to prevent the

conclusion of a treaty with America: it is apprehended that it may have some effect in strengthening the hands of the English party in that country, and retard affairs a little, but it is hoped that the proposal will not be finally agreed to. It would indeed render the Dutch ridiculous. A. having a cane in his hand meets his neighbour B. who happens to have none, takes the advantage, and gives him a sound drubbing: B. having found a stick, and coming to return the blows he received; A. says, my old friend, why should we quarrel? We are neighbours, let us be good ones, and live peaceably by each other as we used to do. If B. is so easily satisfied, and lays aside his stick, the rest of the neighbours as well as A. will laugh at him. This is the light in which I stated it. Enclosed I send you a copy of the proposition.

I see by the newspapers that the Spaniards having taken a little post called St. Joseph, pretend to have made a conquest of the Ilinois country. In what light does this proceeding appear to congress? While they decline our offered friendship, are they to be suffered to encroach on our bounds, and shut us up within the Apalachian Mountains? I begin to fear they have some such project.

With great esteem, I have the honour to be, Sir, your most obedient and most humble servant, B. FRANKLIN.

To THE HON. HENRY LAURENS, ESQ.

SIR, *Passy, April* 12, 1782.

I should sooner have paid my respects to you by letter if I had not till lately expected you here, as I understood it to be your intention. Your enlargement gave me great pleasure; and I hope that the terms exacted by the late ministry, will now be relaxed; especially when they are informed that you are one of the commissioners appointed to treat of peace. Herewith I send you a copy of the commission; the purport of which you can communicate to the ministers if you find it proper. If they are disposed to make peace with us and our allies at the same time, I will on notice from you send to Mr. Jay to prepare for meeting at such time and place as shall be agreed on. As to our treating separately and quitting our present alliance, which the late ministry seemed to desire, it is impossible. Our treaties, and our instructions, as well as the honour and interest of our country forbid it. I will communicate those instructions to you as soon as I have the pleasure of seeing you. If you have occasion for money, please to acquaint me with the sum you desire, and I will endeavour to supply you. With very great esteem and respect, I have the honour to be, Sir, &c, B. FRANKLIN.

Communication from the Court of France to Dr. Franklin, on the overtures for a separate Treaty.

A Versailles le 12 *Avril*, 1782.

J'ai mis sous les yeux de M. le Compte de Vergennes, Monsieur, les differentes lettres que M. Hartley vous a ecrites ainsi que votre projet de reponse; ce ministere a donné une entiere approbation à la maniere dont vous vous exprimez. Je joins ici un post-scriptum concernant Mr. Forth; M. le Compte de Vergennes, qui en a pris lecture, trouve que vous pouvez sans inconvenient le transmettre à votre correspondant.

J'ai l'honneur d'être avec un très sincere attachement, Monsieur, votre très humble et très obeissant serviteur, (signé) De Rayneval.

P. S. Depuis ma lettre ecrite, Monsieur, j'ai pesé de nouveau les differentes ouvertures qu'elle renferme. Selon vous l'ancien ministere Anglois desiroit sincerement une reconciliation avec nous, et il nous proposoit dans cette vue une paix separée. Tandis que vous me transmettiez ce vœu du Lord North, cet ex-ministre avoit ici un emissaire chargé de sonder le ministere François sur ses dispositions pacifiques, et de lui faire des propositions fort avantageuses. Vous pouvez juger par là, Monsieur, de l'opinion que je dois avoir des intentions du Lord North et de ses collégues. Pour vous convaincre de la verité de la notion que je vous transmets, je vous confierai que l'emissaire étoit un M. Forth, et qu'on l'a chargé ici de repondre aux ministres Anglois, que le Roi de France desiroit la paix autant que le Roi d'Angleterre; qu'il s'y preteroit dès qu'il le pourroit avec dignité et sureté; mais qu'il importoit avant tout à S. M. T. C. de savoir si la cour de Londres étoit disposée à traiter egalement avec les Alliés de la France. M. Forth est parti avec cette reponse pour Londres; mais il y a apparence qu'il ne sera arrivé qu'apres la retraite des ministres qui l'avoient envoyé. Vous pourrez, Monsieur, sans aucun inconvenient faire usage de ces details, si vous le jugez à propos: ils feront connoitre au ministere actuel les principes de la cour de France, et ils le convaincront, j'espere, que le projet de nous desunir seroit aussi illusoire qu'il nous seroit injurieux. Quant au problème remis à M. Forth, je ne saurois prevoir (si les nouveaux ministres en sont instruits) de quelle maniere ils croiront devoir le resoudre; s'ils aiment la paix, comme ils l'ont persuadé à la nation Angloise et à toute l'Europe, ils ne doivent pas être embarrassés: la France leur a ouvert une voie qu'ils peuvent, selon moi, suivre sans blesser la dignité de leur maitre; s'ils ne

la suivent pas, ils se flattent sans doute què le sort des armes procurera à l'Angleterre des succès qu'il leur a refusé jusqu'à présent; ce sera à la Providence à couronner ou à frustrer leurs espérances.

To DAVID HARTLEY, Esq. M. P.

DEAR SIR, *Passy, April* 13, 1782.

Since mine of the 5th I have thought farther of the subject of our late letters. You were of opinion, that the late ministry desired *sincerely* a reconciliation with America, and with that view a separate peace with us was proposed. It happened that at the same time Lord North had an emissary here to sound the French ministers with regard to peace, and to make them very advantageous propositions in case they would abandon America. You may judge from hence, my dear friend, what opinion I must have formed of the intentions of your ministers. To convince you of the truth of this, I may acquaint you that the emissary was a Mr. Forth; and that the answer given him to carry back to the English ministers was, *que le roi de France désiroit la paix autant que le roi d'Angleterre; qu'il s'y prêteroit dès qu'il le pourroit avec dignité et sureté; mais qu'il importoit avant tout à S. M. T. C. de savoir si la cour de Londres étoit disposée à traiter également avec les alliés de la France.* Mr. Forth went off with this answer for London, but probably did not arrive till after the dismission of the ministers that sent him. You may make any use of this information as you judge proper. The new ministry may see by it the principles that govern this court; and it will convince them, I hope, that the project of dividing us is as vain as it would be to us injurious. I cannot judge what they will think or do in consequence of the answer sent by Mr. Forth (if they have seen it.) If they love peace, as they have persuaded the English nation and all Europe to believe, they can be under no difficulty. France has opened a path which in my opinion they may use, without hurting the dignity of their master, or the honour of the nation. If they do not choose it they doubtless flatter themselves that war may still produce successes in favour of England that have hitherto been withheld. The crowning or frustrating such hopes belongs to Divine Providence: may God send us all more wisdom! I am ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately, B. FRANKLIN.

To his Excellency JOHN ADAMS, Esq.

SIR, *Passy, April* 13, 1782.

Inclosed with this I send to your Excellency the packet of

correspondence between Mr. Hartley and me which I promised in my last. You will see that we held nearly the same language, which gives me pleasure.

While Mr. Hartley was making propositions to me, with the approbation or privity of Lord North to treat separately from France, that minister had an emissary here, a Mr. Forth, formerly a secretary of Lord Stormont's, making proposals to induce this court to treat without us. I understand that several sacrifices were offered to be made, and among the rest Canada to be given up to France. The substance of the answer appears in my last letter to Mr. Hartley. But there is a sentence omitted in that letter which I much liked, viz, "that whenever the two crowns should come to treat, his most Christian Majesty would show how much the engagements he might enter into, were to be relied on, by his exact observance of those he already had with his present allies."

If you have received any thing in consequence of your answer by Digges, you will oblige me by communicating it. The ministers here were much pleased with the account given them of your interview by the ambassador.

With great respect I am, Sir, your Excellency's &c. B. FRANKLIN.

FROM DAVID HARTLEY, ESQ. M. P. TO DR. FRANKLIN.

MY DEAR FRIEND, *London, May* 1, 1782.

I have received a packet from you containing several letters of various dates. As I shall probably have a safe opportunity of conveyance to you when Mr Laurens leaves this country, I am now sitting down to write to you an *omnium* kind of letter of various matters as they occur. The late ministry being departed I may now speak of things more freely. I will take a sentence in one of your letters for my text. Vide yours of April 13, 1782 in which you say, *you was of opinion that the late ministry desired* SINCERELY *a reconciliation with America, and with that view a separate peace* with us was proposed. I must qualify this sentence much before I can adopt it as my opinion. As to *reconciliation*, I never gave much credit to them for that wish. *It is a sweet expression. It certainly means* MORE *than peace.* The utmost I ever gave the late ministry credit for, was a wish for peace. And I still believe that the wisest among them grew from day to day more disposed to peace or an abatement of the war, in proportion as they became more alarmed for their own situations and their responsibility. Had the war been more successful, I should not have expected much relenting towards peace or reconciliation. That this has always been the measure of my opinion of them I refer you to some words in a letter from me to you, dated January 5, 1780, for

proof—"but for the point of sincerity; why as to that I have not much to say; I have at least expected some hold upon their *prudence*. My argument runs thus: It is a *bargain* for *you* (ministers) to be sincere *now*. Common prudence may hint to you to look to yourselves. It has amazed me beyond measure, that this principle of common selfish *prudence* has not had the effect which I expected." I have not been disposed to be deceived by any conciliatory professions which I considered only as arising from prudence and I hope that I have not led you into any deception, having so fully explained myself to you on that head. Had the American war been more prosperous on the part of the late ministry, I do not believe the late resignation would have taken place. But it is evident from the proposition to the court of France which you have communicated to me, (and which I have communicated to the present ministry with your letter) that even to the last hour, some part of the late ministry were still set upon the American war to the last extremity; and probably another more *prudent* part of the ministry would proceed no farther; which, if it be so, may reasonably be imputed as the cause of the dissolution of the late ministry. These have been the arguments which I have always driven and insisted upon with the greatest expectation of success, viz. *prudential* arguments from the total impracticability of the war; responsibility, &c. I have been astonished beyond measure, that these arguments have not sooner had their effect. If I could give you an idea of many conferences which I have had upon the subject, I should tell you, that many times *Felix has trembled.* When reduced by the terror of responsibility either to renounce the American war, or to relinquish their places, they have chosen the latter; which is a most wretched and contemptible retribution either to their country or to mankind, for the desolation in which they have involved every nation that they have ever been connected with. Peace they would not leave behind them. Their legacy to their country, and to mankind has been; *let darkness be the burier of the dead!*

As to the proposal of a separate peace arising from a desire of *reconciliation*, it certainly was so on the part of the people of England, but on the part of the late ministry, it probably arose from the hopes of suggesting to France ideas of some infidelity on the part of America towards them. If you should ask me, why I have *seemed* to conspire with this, my answer is very plain. In the first place, if I could have prevailed with the late ministry to have actually made an irrevocable offer, *on their own parts*, of a separate peace to America, that very offer would in the same instant have become on their part also a consent to a general peace; because *they* never had any wish to a separate contest with France, and America

being out of the question, *they* would have thought of nothing after that but a general peace. I never could bring them even to this. *They* wished that *America* should make the offer of a separate treaty (for obvious views). *My* proposal was that *they* should offer irrevocable terms of peace to America. If they had meant what they pretended, and what the people of England did really desire, they would have adopted that proposition. Then the question would have come forward upon the fair and honourable construction of a treaty between France and America *the essential and direct end* of which was fully accomplished. When I speak of Great Britain offering irrevocable terms of peace to America, I mean such terms as would have effectually satisfied the provision of the treaty, viz. tacit independence. I send you a paper intitled a *Breviate* [1] which I laid before the late ministry, and their not having acted upon it, was a proof to me that the disposition of their heart to America was not altered, but that all their relenting arose from the impracticability of that war, and their want of success in it. But desponding as they were at last, it was not inconsistent with my expectations of their conduct, that they should make great offers to France to abandon America. It was the only weapon left in their hands. In course of negociating with the late ministry I perceived their courage drooping from time to time, for the last three or four years, and it was upon that ground I gave them credit for an increasing disposition towards peace. Some dropped off; others sunk under the load of folly; and at last they all failed. My argument *ad homines* to the late ministry, might be stated thus. *If you don't kill them, they will kill you.* But the war is impracticable *on your part;* ergo, the best thing you can do *for your own sake* is to make *peace.* This was reasoning to men, and through men to things. But there is no measure of rage in pride and disappointment,

Spicula cæca relinquunt
Infixa venis, animasque in vulnere ponunt.

So much for the argument of the breviate as far as it respected the late ministry. It was a test which proved that they were not sincere to their professions. If they had been in earnest to have given the war a turn towards the house of Bourbon, and to have dropped the American war, a plain road lay before them. The sentiment of the people of England was conformable to the argument of that breviate; or rather I should say what is the real truth, that the argument of the breviate was

[1] Vide the same following this letter.

dictated by the notoriety of that sentiment in the people of England. My object and wish always has been to strike at the root of the evil, the American war. If the British nation have jealousies and resentments against the house of Bourbon, yet still the first step in every case would be to rescind the American war, and not to keep it lurking in the rear, to become hereafter, in case of certain events, a reversionary war with America for unconditional terms. This reversionary war was never the object of the people of England: therefore the argument of the Breviate was calculated bona fide to accomplish their views, and to discriminate the fallacious pretences of the late administration from the real wishes of the country, as expressed in the circular resolution of many counties in the year 1780, first moved at York on March 28, 1780. Every other principle and every mode of conduct only imply, as you very justly express it, a secret hope that war may still produce successes, and then—. The designs which have been lurking under this pretext could not mean any thing else than this. Who knows but that we may still talk to America at last. The only test of clear intentions would have been this, to have cut up the American war and all possible return to it for any cause, or under any pretext. I am confident that the sentiment of the people of England is and always has been to procure peace and reconciliation with America, and to vindicate the national honour in the contest with the house of Bourbon. If this intention had been pursued in a simple and direct manner, I am confident that the honour and safety of the British nation would long ago have been established in a general peace with all the belligerent powers. These are the sentiments to which I have always acted in those negociations which I have had upon the subject of peace with the late ministry. Reconciliation with America and peace with all the world upon terms consistent with the honour and safety of my own country.

Peace must be sought in such ways as promise the greatest degree of practicability. The sentiments of individuals as philanthropists may be overborne by the power of ancient prejudices which too frequently prevail in the aggregates of nations. In such case the philanthropist who wishes the good of his own country, and of mankind, must be the bull-rush bending to the storm, and not the sturdy oak unavailingly resisting. National prejudices are, I hope, generally upon the decline. Reason and humanity gain ground every day against their *natural* enemies, folly and injustice. The ideas of nations being *natural* enemies to each other are generally reprobated. But still *jealousies* and ancient rivalships remain, which obstruct the road to peace among men. If one belligerent nation will entertain a standing force of three or four hundred thousand fighting men, other nations must

have defended frontiers and barrier towns, and the barrier of a neighbouring island whose constitution does not allow a standing military force, must consist in a superiority at sea. It is necessary for her own defence. If all nations by mutual consent will reduce their *offensive* powers, which they only claim under the pretext of necessary *defence*, and bring forward the reign of the Millennium; then away with your frontiers and barriers, and your Gibraltars, and the key of the Baltic, and all the hostile array of nations.

Aspera compositis nitescant sæcula bellis.

These must be the sentiments of every philanthropist in his interior thoughts. But if we are not to seek peace by some practicable method accommodated to the remaining prejudices of the multitude, we shall not in our time, I fear, see that happy day. If Great Britain and France are ancient rivals; then, until the reign of the Millennium shall approach, arrange that rivalship upon equitable terms; as the two leading nations of Europe, set them in balance to each other; the one by land, the other by sea. Give to France her elevated rank among the nations of Europe. Give to Great Britain the honour of her flag, and the security of her island by her wooden walls, and there would be no obstruction to general and perpetual peace. The prejudices of disrespect between nations prevail only among the inferior ranks. Believe me, for one at least, I have the highest sentiments of respect for the nation of France. I have no other sentiments of hostility but what are honourable towards them, and which as a member of a rival state at war with them, consists in the duty of vigilance which I owe towards the honour and interests of my own country. I am not conscious of a word or a thought which *on the point of honour* I would wish to have concealed from a French minister. In the mode which I have proposed of unravelling the present subjects of jealousy and contest, I would make my proposals openly to France herself. Let America be free, and enjoy happiness and peace for ever. If France and Great Britain have jealousies or rivalships between themselves, as European nations, I then say to France; let us settle these points between ourselves; if unfortunately we shall not be able by honourable negociation to compromise the indispensable points of national honour and safety. This would be my language to France, open and undisguised. In the mean while I desire you to observe that it would not be with reluctance that I should offer eternal freedom, happiness and peace to America. You know my thoughts too well to suspect that. I speak only as in a state of war desirous to arrange the complicated interests, and to secure the respective honour of nations. My wishes are and always have been for the peace, liberty and safety of mankind. In the

pursuit of those blessed objects not only this country and America, but France herself and the house of Bourbon, may justly claim the conspiring exertions of every free and liberal mind, even among their temporary enemies and rivals. I am, &c.

D. HARTLEY.

Breviate, Feb. 7, 1782.

[Inclosed in the Letter of D. HARTLEY, Esq. of May 1, 1782.]

It is stated that America is disposed to enter into a negociation of peace with Great Britain without requiring any formal recognition of Independence, always understood that they are to act in conjunction with their allies, conformable to treaties.

It is therefore recommended to give for reply that the ministers of Great Britain are likewise disposed to enter into a negociation for peace, and that they are ready to open a general treaty for that purpose.

If the British ministers should see any objection to a general treaty, but should still be disposed to enter into a separate treaty with America, it is then recommended to them to offer such terms to America as shall induce her to apply to her allies for their consent that she should be permitted to enter into a separate treaty with Great Britain. The condition of which being the consent of allies, no proposition of any breach of faith can be understood to be required by them by the requisition of a separate treaty.

The British ministers are free to make any propositions to America which they may think proper, provided they be not dishonourable in themselves, which in the present case is barred by the supposition of consent being obtained. In this case therefore if they should be inclined to offer a separate treaty it is recommended to them to offer such terms to America as should induce her to be desirous of closing with the proposal of a separate treaty on the grounds of national security and interests, and likewise such as may constitute to them a case of reason and justice upon which they may make requisition to their allies for their consent. It is suggested that the offer to America of a truce of sufficient length, together with the removal of the British troops, would be equivalent to that case which is provided for in the treaty of February 6, 1778, between America and France, viz. *tacit* independence; and the declared ends of that alliance being accomplished it would not be reasonable that America should be dragged on by their allies in a war, the continuance of which between France and Great Britain could only be caused by separate European jealousies and resentments (if unfortunately for the public peace

any such should arise) between themselves, independent and unconnected with the American cause. It is to be presumed that France would not in point of honour to their allies refuse their consent so requested, as any rivalship or punctilios between her and Great Britain, as European nations (principles which too frequently disturb the peace of mankind), could not be considered as *casus fœderis* of the American alliance; and their pride as a belligerent power would not permit them to claim the assistance of America as necessary to their support, thereby proclaiming their nation unequal to the contest in case of the continuance of a war with Great Britain after the settlement and pacification with America. Their consent therefore is to be presumed. But if they should demur on this point, if Great Britain should be disposed to concede *tacit* independence to America by a long truce and the removal of the troops, and if the obstruction should evidently occur on the part of France, under any equivocal or captious construction of a *defensive* treaty of alliance between America and France, Great Britain would from thenceforward stand upon advantage ground, either in any negociation with America, or in the continuance of a war including America, but not arising from any farther resentments of Great Britain towards America, but imposed reluctantly upon both parties by the conduct of the Court of France.

These thoughts are not suggested with any view of giving any preference in favour of a separate treaty above a general treaty, or above any plans of separate but concomitant treaties, like the treaties of Munster and Osnaburgh, but only to draw out the line of negociating a separate treaty in case the British ministry should think it necessary to adhere to that mode. But in all cases it should seem indispensable to express some disposition on the part of Great Britain to adopt either one mode or the other. An absolute refusal to treat at all must necessarily drive America into the closest connexion with France and all other foreign hostile powers who would take that advantage for making every possible stipulation to the future disadvantage of British interests, and above all things would probably stipulate that America should never make peace with Great Britain without the most formal and explicit recognition of their Independence, absolute and unlimited.

Private Journal of proceedings, as kept by Dr. FRANKLIN, relative to the Negociations for Peace between Great Britain and the United States of America, in the period between the 21st March and 1st July 1782.

Passy, May 9, 1782.

As since the change of ministry in England, some serious professions have been made of their disposition to peace, and of their readiness to enter into a general treaty for that purpose; and as the concerns and claims of five nations are to be discussed in that treaty, which must therefore be interesting to the present age and to posterity, I am inclined to keep a journal of the proceedings as far as they come to my knowledge, and to make it more complete will first endeavour to recollect what has already past.

Great affairs sometimes take their rise from small circumstances. My good friend and neighbour Madame Brillon being at Nice all last winter for her health, with her very amiable family, wrote to me that she had met with some English gentry there whose acquaintance proved agreeable; among them she named Lord Cholmondeley, who she said had promised to call in his return to England, and drink tea with us at Passy. He left Nice sooner than she supposed, and came to Paris long before her. On the 21st of March I received the following note.

"Lord Cholmondeley's compliments to Dr. Franklin, he sets out for London to-morrow evening, and should be glad to see him for five minutes before he went. Lord C. will call upon him at any time in the morning he shall please to appoint.

Thursday Evening, Hotel de Chartres."

I wrote for answer that I should be at home all the next morning, and glad to see his Lordship, if he did me the honour of calling upon me. I had before no personal knowledge of this nobleman. We talked of our friends whom he left at Nice, then of affairs in England, and the late resolutions of the Commons on Mr. Conway's motion. He told me that he knew Lord Shelburne had a great regard for me, that he was sure his Lordship would be pleased to hear from me, and that if I would write a line he should have a pleasure in carrying it. On which I wrote the following.

To Lord Shelburne.

Passy, March 22, 1782.

Lord Cholmondeley having kindly offered to take a letter from me to your Lordship, I embrace the opportunity of assuring the continuance of my ancient respect for your talents and virtues, and of congratulating you on the returning good disposition of your country in favour of America, which appears in the late resolutions of the Commons. I am persuaded it will have good effects. I hope it will tend to produce a *general peace*, which I am sure your Lordship with all good men desires, which I wish to see before I die, and to which I shall with infinite pleasure contribute every thing in my power. Your friends the Abbè Morellet, and Madame Helvetius are well. With great and sincere esteem, I have the honour to be, my Lord, your Lordship's most obedient and most humble servant,

B. Franklin.

Soon after this we heard from England that a total change had taken place in the ministry, and that Lord Shelburne was come in as Secretary of State. But I thought no more of my letter 'till an old friend and near neighbour of mine, many years in London, appeared at Passy, and introduced a Mr. Oswald, who he said had a great desire to see me, and Mr. Oswald after some little conversation gave me the following letters from Lord Shelburne, and Mr. Laurens.

Dear Sir, *London, April 6,* 1782.

I have been favoured with your letter, and am much obliged by your remembrance. I find myself returned nearly to the same situation, which you remember me to have occupied nineteen years ago, and should be very glad to talk to you as I did then, and afterwards in 1767, upon the means of promoting the happiness of mankind, a subject much more agreeable to my nature, than the best concerted plans for spreading misery and devastation. I have had an high opinion of the compass of your mind, and of your foresight. I have often been beholden to both, and shall be glad to be so again, so far as is compatible with your situation. Your letter discovering the same disposition has made me send to you Mr. Oswald. I have had a longer acquaintance with him, than even I have had the pleasure to have with you. I believe him an honest man, and after consulting some of our common friends, I have thought him the fittest for the purpose. He is a practical man, and conversant in those negociations, which are most interesting to mankind. This has made me prefer him to any of our speculative friends, or to

any person of higher rank. He is fully apprized of my mind, and you may give full credit to every thing he assures you of. At the same time if any other channel occurs to you, I am ready to embrace it. I wish to retain the same simplicity and good faith, which subsisted between us in transactions of less importance. I have the honour to be, with great and sincere esteem, dear Sir, your faithful and most obedient servant, SHELBURNE.

FROM HENRY LAURENS, ESQ. TO DR. FRANKLIN.

DEAR SIR, *London, April* 7, 1782.

Richard Oswald, Esq. who will do me the honour of delivering this, is a gentleman of the strictest candor and integrity. I dare give such assurance from an experience little short of thirty years; and to add, you will be perfectly safe in conversing freely with him on the business which he will introduce; a business in which Mr. Oswald has disinterestedly engaged from motives of benevolence; and from the choice of the man a persuasion follows that the electors mean to be in earnest. Some people in this country who have too long indulged themselves in abusing every thing American, have been pleased to circulate an opinion that Dr. Franklin is a very cunning man; in answer to which I have remarked to Mr. Oswald, "Dr. Franklin knows very well how to manage a cunning man, but when the doctor converses or treats with a man of candor, there is no man more candid than himself." I do not know whether you will ultimately agree in political sketches, but I am sure, as gentlemen, you will part very well pleased with each other.

Should you, Sir, think it proper to communicate to me your sentiments and advice on our affairs, the more ample the more acceptable, and probably the more serviceable. Mr. Oswald will take charge of your dispatches, and afford a secure means of conveyance; to this gentleman I refer you for general information of a journey which I am immediately to make partly in his company, at Ostend to file off for the Hague. I feel a willingness, infirm as I am, to attempt doing as much good as can be expected from such a prisoner on parole. As General Burgoyne is certainly exchanged, a circumstance by the bye which possibly might have embarrassed us had your late proposition been accepted, may I presume at my return to offer another Lieutenant General now in England a prisoner upon parole, in exchange; or, what shall I offer in England for myself, a thing in my own estimation of no great value? I have the honour to be, with great respect, and

permit me to add, great reverence, Sir, your faithful fellow labourer and obedient servant, (Signed) HENRY LAURENS.

I entered into conversation with Mr. Oswald. He was represented in the letter as fully apprized of Lord Shelburne's mind, and I was desirous of knowing it. All I could learn was, that the new ministry sincerely wished for peace; that they considered the object of the war to France and America as obtained. That if the Independence of the United States was agreed to, there was no other point in dispute, and therefore nothing left to hinder a pacification. That they were ready to treat of *peace*, but intimated that if France should insist upon terms too humiliating to England, they could still continue the war, having yet great strength and many resources left. I let him know that America would not treat but in concert with France, and that my colleagues not being here, I could do nothing of importance in the affair; but that if he pleased I would present him to M. de Vergennes, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. He consenting I wrote and sent the following letter.

To M. LE COMTE DE VERGENNES,
Minister for Foreign Affairs, &c. Versailles.

SIR, *Passy, April* 15, 1782.

An English nobleman, Lord Cholmondeley, lately returning from Italy called upon me here, at the time when we received the news of the first resolutions of the House of Commons relating to America. In conversation he said, that he knew his friend Lord Shelburne had a great regard for me, that it would be pleasing to him to hear of my welfare, and to receive a line from me, of which he, Lord Cholmondeley, should like to be the bearer; adding, that if there should be a change of ministry he believed Lord Shelburne would be employed. I thereupon wrote a few lines of which I inclose a copy. This day I received an answer which I also inclose, together with another letter from Mr. Laurens. They both, as your Excellency will see, recommend the bearer Mr. Oswald as a very honest sensible man. I have had a little conversation with him. He tells me, that there has been a desire of making a separate peace with America, and of continuing the war with France and Spain, but that now all wise people give up that idea as impracticable, and it is his private opinion that the ministry do sincerely desire a *general peace*, and that they will readily come into it, provided France does not insist upon conditions too humiliating for England, in which case she will make

great and violent efforts rather than submit to them, and that much is still in her power, &c. I told the gentleman that I could not enter into particulars with him, but in concert with the ministers of this Court, and I proposed introducing him to your Excellency after communicating to you the letters he had brought me in case you should think fit to see him; with which he appeared to be pleased. I intend waiting on you to-morrow, when you will please to acquaint me with your intentions and favour me with your counsels. He had heard nothing of Forth's mission and imagined the old ministry had not acquainted the new with that transaction. Mr. Lawrens came over with him in the same vessel, and went from Ostend to Holland. I have the honour to be, &c. B. FRANKLIN.

The next day being at Court with the foreign ministers as usual on Tuesdays, I saw M. de Vergennes, who acquainted me that he had caused the letters to be translated, had considered the contents, and should like to see Mr. Oswald. We agreed that the interview should be on Wednesday at 10 o'clock.

Immediately on my return home, I wrote to Mr. Oswald, acquainting him with what had passed at Versailles, and proposing that he should be with me at half-past eight the next morning in order to proceed thither.

I received from him the following answer.

SIR,

I have the honour of yours by the bearer, and shall be sure to wait on you to-morrow at half-past eight. I am with much respect, Sir, your most obedient humble servant, RICHARD OSWALD.

Paris, 16 April.

He came accordingly, and we arrived at Versailles punctually. M. de Vergennes received us with much civility. Mr. Oswald not being ready in speaking French, M. de Rayneval interpreted. The conversation continued near an hour. Mr. Oswald at first thought of sending an express with an account of it, and was offered a passport, but finally concluded to go himself; and I wrote the next day to Lord Shelburne the letter following.

MY LORD, *Passy, April* 13, 1782.

I have received the letter your Lordship did me the honour of writing to me the 6th instant. I congratulate you on your new appointment to the honourable and important office you formerly filled so worthily, an office which

must be so far pleasing to you as it affords you more opportunities of doing good and of serving your country essentially in its great concerns. I have conversed a good deal with Mr. Oswald, and am much pleased with him. He appears to me a wise and honest man. I acquainted him, that I was commissioned with others to treat of and conclude a peace. That full powers were given us for that purpose, and that the Congress promised in good faith to ratify, confirm, and cause to be faithfully observed, the treaty we should make: but that we would not treat separately from France, and I proposed introducing him to M. le Comte de Vergennes, to whom I communicated your Lordship's letter containing Mr. Oswald's character, as a foundation for the interview. He will acquaint you that the assurance he gave of his Britannic Majesty's good dispositions towards peace, was well received, and assurances returned of the same dispositions in his most Christian Majesty. With regard to circumstances relative to a treaty, M. de Vergennes observed, that the King's engagements were such as that he could not treat without the concurrence of his allies; that the treaty should therefore be for a general not a partial peace: that if the parties were disposed to finish the war speedily by themselves, it would perhaps be best to treat at Paris, as an ambassador from Spain was already there, and the Commissioners from America might easily and soon be assembled there. Or if they chose to make use of the proposed mediation, they might treat at Vienna: but that the King was so truly willing to put a speedy end to the war, that he would agree to any place the King of England should think proper. I leave the rest of the conversation to be related to your Lordship by Mr. Oswald, and that he might do it more easily and fully than he could by letter, I was of opinion with him that it would be best to return immediately, and do it *vivâ voce*. Being myself but one of the four persons now in Europe commissioned by the Congress to treat of peace, I can make no proposition of such importance without them; I can only express my wish, that if Mr. Oswald returns hither, he may bring with him the agreement of your Court to treat for a general peace and the proposal of place and time, that I may immediately write to Messrs. Adams, Laurens, and Jay. I suppose that in this case your Lordship will think it proper to have Mr. Laurens discharged from the engagements he entered into when he was admitted to bail. I desire no other channel of communication between us than Mr. Oswald, which I think your Lordship has chosen with much judgment. He will be witness of my acting with all the simplicity and good faith which you do me the honour to expect from me; and if he is enabled when he returns hither to communicate more fully your Lordship's mind on the

principal points to be settled, I think it may contribute much to the blessed work our hearts are engaged in.

By the act of parliament relative to American prisoners, I see the King is empowered to exchange them. I hope those you have in England and Ireland may be sent home soon to their country in flags of truce, and exchanged for an equal number of your people; permit me to add that I think it would be well if some kindness were mixed in the transaction with regard to their comfortable accommodation on ship board; as those poor unfortunate people have been long absent from their families and friends, and rather hardly treated. With great and sincere respect, I have the honour to be, my Lord, your Lordship's, &c. &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

To the account contained in this letter of what passed in the conversation with the minister, I should add his frank declaration, that as the foundation of a good and durable peace should be laid in justice, whenever a treaty was entered upon, he had several demands to make of justice from England. Of this, says he, I give you previous notice. What those demands were he did not particularly say; one occurred to me, viz. reparation for the injury done in taking a number of French ships by surprize before the declaration of the preceding war, contrary to the law of nations. Mr. Oswald seemed to wish obtaining some propositions to carry back with him, but M. de Vergennes said to him very properly; "there are four nations engaged in the war against you, who cannot 'till they have consulted and know each other's minds, be ready to make propositions. Your Court being without allies and alone, knowing its own mind, can express it immediately. It is therefore more natural to expect the first propositions from you.

On our return from Versailles, Mr. Oswald took occasion to impress me with ideas, that the present weakness of the government in England with regard to continuing the war, was owing chiefly to the division of sentiments about it. That in case France should make demands too humiliating for England to submit to, the spirit of the nation would be roused, unanimity would prevail, and resources would not be wanting. He said there was no want of money in the nation; that the chief difficulty lay in the finding out new taxes to raise it; and perhaps that difficulty might be avoided by shutting up the Exchequer, stopping the payment of the interests of the public funds, and applying that money to the support of the war. I made no reply to this, for I did not desire to discourage their stopping payment, which I considered as cutting the throat of their public credit, and a means of

adding fresh exasperation against them with the neighbouring nations: such menaces were besides an encouragement with me, remembering the adage, that *they who threaten are afraid.*

The next morning when I had written the above letter to Lord Shelburne, I went with it to Mr. Oswald's lodgings, and gave it him to read before I sealed it, that in case any thing might be in it with which he was not satisfied, it might be corrected; but he expressed himself much pleased. In going to him, I had also in view the entering into a conversation, which might draw out something of the mind of his court on the subject of Canada and Nova Scotia. I had thrown out some loose thoughts on paper, which I intended to serve as memorandums for my discourse, but without a fixed intention of showing them to him. On his saying that he was obliged to me for the good opinion I had expressed of him to Lord Shelburne in my letter, and assuring that he had entertained the same of me; I observed that I perceived Lord S. placed great confidence in him, and as we had happily the same in each other, we might possibly by a free communication of sentiments, and a previous settling of our own minds on some of the important points, be the means of great good, by impressing our sentiments on the minds of those with whom they might have influence, and where their being received might be of importance. I then remarked that his nation seemed to desire a reconciliation with America; that I heartily wished the same thing; that a mere peace would not produce half its advantages if not attended with a sincere reconciliation; that to obtain this the party which had been the aggressors, and had cruelly treated the other, should shew some marks of concern for what was past, and some disposition to make reparation: that perhaps there were things which America might demand by way of reparation, and which England might yield, but that the effect would be vastly greater if they appeared to be voluntary, and to spring from returning good-will; that I therefore wished England would think of offering something to relieve them who had suffered by its scalping and burning parties; lives indeed could not be restored nor compensated, but the villages and houses wantonly destroyed might be rebuilt, &c. I then touched upon the affair of Canada, and as in a former conversation he had maintained his opinion, that the giving up of that country to the English at the last peace had been a politic act in France, for that it had weakened the ties between England and her Colonies, and that he himself had predicted from it the late revolution, I spoke of the occasions of future quarrels that might be produced by her continuing to hold it, hinting at the same time, but not expressing too plainly, that such a situation, to us so dangerous, would

necessarily oblige us to cultivate and strengthen our union with France. He appeared much struck with my discourse; and as I frequently looked at my paper, he desired to see it. After some little delay I allowed him to read it. The following is an exact copy.

NOTES OF CONVERSATION.

"To make a peace durable, what may give occasion for future wars should, if practicable, be removed.

The territory of the United States and that of Canada by long extended frontiers touch each other.

The settlers on the frontiers of the American provinces are generally the most disorderly of the people, who being far removed from the eye and controul of their respective governments, are more bold in committing offences against neighbours, and are for ever occasioning complaints, and furnishing matter for fresh differences between their States.

By the late debates in parliament and public writings it appears that Britain desires a *reconciliation* with the Americans. It is a sweet word. It means much more than a mere peace, and it is heartily to be wished for. Nations make a peace whenever they are both weary of making war. But if one of them has made war upon the other unjustly, and has wantonly and unnecessarily done it great injuries, and refuses reparation; though there may for the present be peace, the resentment of those injuries will remain, and will break out again in vengeance, when occasions offer. Those occasions will be watched for by one side, feared by the other; and the peace will never be secure; nor can any cordiality subsist between them.

Many houses and villages have been burnt in America, by the English and their allies the Indians. I do not know that the Americans will insist on reparation. Perhaps they may. But would it not be better for England to offer it? Nothing would have a greater tendency to conciliate. And much of the future commerce and returning intercourse between the two countries may depend on the reconciliation. Would not the advantage of reconciliation by such means be greater than the expence?

If then a way can be proposed which may tend to efface the memory of injuries, at the same time that it takes away the occasions of fresh quarrels and mischief, will it not be worth considering, especially if it can be done not only without expence, but be a means of saving.

Britain possesses Canada. Her chief advantage from that possession consists in the trade for peltry. Her expences in governing and defending that settlement must be considerable. It might be humiliating to her to give it up on the demand of America. Perhaps America will not demand it. Some of her political rulers may consider the fear of such a neighbour as a means of keeping the thirteen States more united among themselves and more attentive to military discipline. But in the mind of the people in general, would it not have an excellent effect if Britain should voluntarily offer to give up that province; though on these conditions, that she should in all time coming have and enjoy the right of free trade thither unincumbered with any duties whatsoever; that so much of the waste lands there shall be sold as will raise a sum sufficient to pay for the houses burnt by the British troops and their Indians, and also to indemnify the Royalists for the confiscation of their estates.

This is mere conversation matter between Mr. O. and Mr. F. as the former is not empowered to make propositions, and the latter cannot make any without the concurrence of his colleagues."

He then told me that nothing in his judgment could be clearer, more satisfactory, and convincing than the reasonings in that paper; that he would do his utmost to impress Lord Shelburne with them; that as his memory might not do them justice, and it would be impossible for him to express them so well, or state them so clearly as I had written them, he begged I would let him take the paper with him, assuring me that he would return it safely into my hands. I at length complied with this request also. We parted exceeding good friends, and he set out for London.

By the first opportunity afterwards I wrote the following letter to Mr. Adams, and sent the papers therein mentioned, that he might be fully apprized of the proceedings. I omitted only the paper of *notes for conversation* with Mr. Oswald, but gave the substance as appears in the letter. The reason of my omitting it was, that on reflection, I was not pleased with my having hinted a reparation to the Tories for their forfeited estates; and I was a little ashamed of my weakness in permitting the paper to go out of my hands.

SIR, *Passy, April* 20, 1782.

I hope your Excellency received the copy of our instructions which I sent by the courier from Versailles some weeks since. I wrote to you on the 15th to go by Capt. Smedley, and sent a packet of correspondence with Mr. Hartley. Smedley did not leave Paris so soon as I expected: but you should have

it by this time. With this I send a fresh correspondence which I have been drawn into, viz. 1. A letter I sent to Lord Shelburne before he was minister. 2. His answer by Mr. Oswald since he was minister. 3. A letter from Mr. Laurens. 4. My letter to Mr. de Vergennes. 5. My answer to Lord Shelburne. 6. My answer to Mr. Laurens. 7. Copy of Digges's report. These papers will inform you pretty well of what passed between me and Mr. Oswald, except that in a conversation at parting I mentioned to him, that I observed they spoke much in England of obtaining a *reconciliation* with the colonies; that this was more than a mere *peace;* that the latter might possibly be obtained without the former; that the cruel injuries wantonly done us by burning our towns, &c. had made deep impressions of resentment that would long remain; that much of the advantage to the commerce of England from a peace, would depend on a *reconciliation;* that the peace without a reconciliation would probably not be durable; that after a quarrel between friends, nothing tended so much to *conciliate*, as offers made by the aggressor of reparation for injuries done by him in his passion. And I hinted if England should make us a voluntary offer of Canada expressly for that purpose, it might have a good effect. Mr. Oswald liked much the idea, said they were too much straitened for money to make us pecuniary reparation, but he should endeavour to persuade their doing it in this way. He is furnished with a passport to go and return by Calais, and I expect him back in ten or twelve days. I wish you and Mr. Laurens could be here when he arrives: for I shall much want your advice, and cannot act without your concurrence. If the present crisis of your affairs prevents your coming, I hope at least Mr. Laurens will be here, and we must communicate with you by expresses, for your letters to me per post are generally opened. I shall write per next post requesting Mr. Jay to be here also as soon as possible.

I received your letter advising of a draft on me for a quarter's salary, which will be duly honoured. With great esteem, I have the honour to be your Excellency's, &c. &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

Supposing Mr. Laurens to be in Holland with Mr. Adams, I at the same time wrote the following letter:—

SIR, *Passy, April* 20, 1782.

I received by Mr. Oswald the letter you did me the honour of writing to me the 7th instant; he brought me also a letter from Lord Shelburne,

which gave him the same good character that you do, adding, "he is fully apprized of my mind, and you may give full credit to every thing he assures you of." Mr. Oswald however could give me no other particulars of his Lordship's mind, but that he was sincerely disposed to peace. As the message seemed therefore rather intended to procure or receive propositions than to make any, I told Mr. Oswald that I could make none but in concurrence with my colleagues in the commission, and that if we were together we should not treat but in conjunction with France, and I proposed introducing him to Mr. de Vergennes, which he accepted. He made to that minister the same declaration of the disposition of England to peace, who replied that France had already the same good dispositions; that a treaty might be immediately begun, but it must be for a *general* not particular peace. That as to the place he thought Paris might be most convenient, as Spain had here already an ambassador, and the American Commissioners could easily be assembled here: this upon a supposition of the parties treating directly with each other without the intervention of mediators. But if the mediation was to be used, it might be at Vienna. The King his master however was so truly disposed to peace, that he would agree to any place the King of England should chuse; and would at the treaty give proof of the confidence that might be placed in any engagements he should enter into, by the fidelity and exactitude with which he should observe those he already had with his present allies. Mr. Oswald is returned with these general answers, by the way of Calais, and expects to be here again in a few days. I wish it might be convenient for you and Mr. Adams to be here at the same time: but if the present critical situation of affairs there, make his being in Holland necessary just now, I hope you may nevertheless be here, bringing with you his opinion and advice. I have proposed to Lord Shelburne to discharge you from the obligations you entered into at the time of your enlargement, that you may act more freely in the treaty he desires. I had done myself the honour of writing to you a few days before the arrival of Mr. Oswald. My letter went by Mr. Young, your secretary, and inclosed a copy of our commission, with an offer of money if you had occasion for any. Hoping that you will not return to England before you have been at Paris, I forbear enlarging on the state of our affairs here and in Spain. M. de Vergennes told me he should be very glad to see you here. I found Mr. Oswald to answer perfectly the character you gave me of him, and was much pleased with him. I have the honour to be, with great esteem and respect, Sir, &c. &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

Just after I had dispatched these letters, I received the following from Mr. Adams.

SIR, *Amsterdam, April* 16, 1782.

Yesterday noon Mr. William Vaughan of London came to my house with Mr. Laurens the son of the President, and brought me a line from the latter, and told me that the President was at Haerlem, and desired to see me. I went out to Haerlem and found my old friend at the Golden Lion.

He told me he was come partly for his health, and the pleasure of seeing me, and partly to converse with me, and see if he had at present just ideas and views of things; at least to see if we agreed in sentiment, and having been desired by several of the new ministry to do so.

I asked him if he was at liberty? He said, No, that he was still under parole, but at liberty to say what he pleased to me.

I told him that I could not communicate to him, being a prisoner, even his own instructions, nor enter into any consultation with him as one of our colleagues in the commission for peace: that all I should say to him would be as one private citizen conversing with another: but that upon all such occasions I should reserve a right to communicate whatever should pass to our colleagues and allies.

He said that Lord Shelburne and others of the new ministers were anxious to know whether there was any authority to treat of a separate peace, and whether there could be an accommodation upon any terms short of Independence; that he had ever answered them, that nothing short of an express or tacit acknowledgment of our independence in his opinion would ever be accepted, and that no treaty ever would or could be made separate from France. He asked me if his answers had been right? I told him, I was fully of that opinion.

He said that the new ministers had received Digges's report, but his character was such that they did not chuse to depend upon it: that a person by the name of Oswald, I think, set off for Paris to see you, about the same time that he came away to see me.

I desired him, between him and me, to consider, without saying any thing of it to the ministry, whether we could ever have a real peace with Canada and Nova Scotia in the hands of the English? And whether we ought not to insist at least upon a stipulation, that they should keep no standing army or regular troops, nor erect any fortifications on the frontiers of either? That at present I saw no motive

that we had to be anxious for a peace, and if the nation was not ripe for it upon proper terms, we might wait patiently, till they should be so.

I found the old gentleman perfectly sound in his system of politics. He has a very poor opinion both of the integrity and abilities of the new ministry as well as the old. He thinks they know not what they are about; that they are spoiled by the same insincerity, duplicity, falsehood, and corruption with the former. Lord Shelburne still flatters the king with ideas of conciliation and separate peace &c. Yet the nation and the best men in it are for a universal peace, and an express acknowledgment of American independence, and many of the best are for giving up Canada and Nova Scotia.

His design seemed to be solely to know how far Digges's report was true. After an hour or two of conversation, I returned to Amsterdam, and left him to return to London.

These are all but artifices to raise the stocks, and if you think of any method to put a stop to them, I will cheerfully concur with you. They now know sufficiently, that our commission is to treat of a general peace, and with persons vested with equal powers; and if you agree to it I will never see another messenger that is not a plenipotentiary.

It is expected that the seventh province, Guelderland, will this day acknowledge American independence. I think we are in such a situation now that we ought not upon any consideration to think of a truce, or any thing short of an express acknowledgment of the sovereignty of the United States. I should be glad however to know your sentiments upon this point.

I have the honour to be, Sir, your most obedient and most humble servant,

JOHN ADAMS.

To the above I immediately wrote the following answer.

SIR, *Passy, April 2, 1782.*

I have just received the honour of yours dated the 16th instant acquainting me with the interview between your Excellency and Mr. Laurens. I am glad to learn that his political sentiments coincide with ours, and that there is a disposition in England to give us up Canada and Nova Scotia.

I like your idea of seeing no more messengers that are not plenipotentiaries; but I cannot refuse seeing Mr. Oswald again, as the minister here considered the letter to me from Lord Shelburne as a kind of authority given that messenger, and

expects his return with some explicit propositions. I shall keep you advised of what passes.

The late act of parliament for exchanging American prisoners as *prisoners of war*, according to the law of nations, any thing in their commitments *notwithstanding*, seemed a renunciation of their pretensions to try our people as subjects guilty of high treason, and to be a kind of tacit acknowledgment of our independence. Having taken this step, it will be less difficult for them to acknowledge it expressly. They are now preparing transports to send the prisoners home. I yesterday sent the passports desired of me.

Sir George Grand shows me a letter from Mr. Fizeaux in which he says that if advantage is taken of the present enthusiasm in favour of America, a loan might be obtained in Holland of five or six millions of florins for America, and if their house is impowered to open it he has no doubt of success; but that no time is to be lost. I earnestly recommend this matter to you, as extremely necessary to the operations of our financier Mr. Morris, who not knowing that the greatest part of the last five millions had been consumed by purchase of goods &c. in Europe, writes me advice of large drafts that he shall be obliged to make upon me this summer. This court has granted us six millions of livres for the current year; but it will fall vastly short of our occasions, there being large orders to fulfil, and near two millions and a half to pay M. Beaumarchais, besides the interest of bills &c. The house of Fizeaux and Grand is now appointed banker for France by a special commission from the king, and will on that as well as other accounts, be in my opinion the fittest for this operation. Your Excellency being on the spot, can better judge of the terms &c. and manage with that house the whole business, in which I should be glad to have no other concern, than that of receiving assistance from it when pressed by the dreaded drafts.

With great respect, I am, your Excellency's &c. B. FRANKLIN.

In reply to this Mr. Adams wrote to me as follows.

SIR, *Amsterdam, May* 2, 1782.

I am honoured with your favour of the 20th April, and Mr. Laurens's son proposes to carry the letter to his father forthwith. The instructions by the courier from Versailles came safe, as also other dispatches by that channel no doubt will do. The correspondence with Mr. Hartley, I received by Captain Smedley, and will take the first good opportunity by a private hand to return it, as well as that with the E. of S.

Mr. Laurens and Mr. Jay will I hope be able to meet at Paris, but when it will be in my power to go I know not. Your present negociation about peace falls in very well to aid a proposition which I am instructed to make, as soon as the court of Versailles shall judge proper, of a triple or quadruple alliance. This matter, the treaty of commerce which is now under deliberation, and the loan will render it improper for me to quit this station unless in case of necessity. If there is a real disposition to permit Canada to accede to the American association, I should think there could be no great difficulty in adjusting all things between England and America, provided our allies are contented too. In a former letter I hinted that I thought an express acknowledgment of our independence might now be insisted on: but I did not mean that we should insist upon such an article in the treaty. If they make a treaty of peace with the United States of America, this is acknowledgment enough for me. The affair of a loan gives me much anxiety and fatigue. It is true I may open a loan for five millions, but I confess I have no hopes of obtaining so much. The money is not to be had. Cash is not infinite in this country. Their profits by trade have been ruined for two or three years; and there are loans open for France, Spain, England, Russia, Sweden, Denmark, and several other powers, as well as their own national, provincial and collegiate loans. The undertakers are already loaded with burthens greater than they can bear, and all the Brokers in the republic are so engaged, that there is scarcely a ducat to be lent but what is promised.

This is the true cause why we shall not succeed; yet they will seek an hundred other pretences. It is considered such an honour and such an introduction to American trade to be the House, that the eagerness to obtain the title of American banker is prodigious. Various houses have pretensions which they set up very high, and let me chuse which I will, I am sure of a cry and a clamour. I have taken some measures to endeavour to calm the heat and give general satisfaction, but have as yet small hopes of success. I would strike with any house that would insure the money, but none will undertake it now it is offered, although several were very ready to affirm that they could when it began to be talked of. Upon enquiry they do not find the money easy to obtain, which I could have told them before. It is to me personally perfectly indifferent which is the house, and the only question is, which will be able to do best for the interest of the United States. This question however simple is not easy to answer. But I think it clear, after very painful and laborious enquiries for a year and a half, that no house whatever will be able to do much. Enthusiasm at some times and in some countries may do a great deal, but

there has as yet been no enthusiasm in this country for America, strong enough to untie many purses. Another year, if the war should continue, perhaps we may do better.

I have the honour to be, Sir, your most obedient and most humble servant,

J. ADAMS.

During Mr. Oswald's absence I received the following from Mr. Laurens.

SIR, *London, April* 30, 1782.

I writ to you on the 7th instant by Mr. Oswald, since which, that is to say on the 28th, I was honoured with the receipt of your letter of the 12th, inclosing a copy of the commission for treating for peace, by the hands of Mr. Young.

The recognizance exacted from me by the late ministry has been vacated and done away by the present. These have been pleased to enlarge me without formal conditions, but as I would not consent that the United States of America should be outdone in generosity, however late the marks appeared on this side, I took upon me to assure Lord Shelburne in a letter of acknowledgment for the part which his lordship had taken for obtaining my release, that Congress would not fail to make a just and adequate return,—the only return in my view is Lieutenant General Lord Cornwallis; Congress were pleased to offer some time ago a British Lieutenant General for my ransom, and as I am informed the special exchange of Lord Cornwallis for the same subject was lately in contemplation, it would afford me very great satisfaction to know that you will join me in cancelling the debt of honour which we have impliedly incurred, by discharging his lordship from the obligations of his parole; for my own part, though not a bold adventurer, I think I shall not commit myself to the risque of censure by acting conjunctly with you in such a bargain. I intreat you, sir, at least to reflect on this matter; I shall take the liberty of requesting your determination when I reach the continent, which will probably happen in a few days. Lord Cornwallis in a late conversation with me put the following case. Suppose, said his lordship, it shall have been agreed in America that Lord Cornwallis should be offered in exchange for Mr. Laurens, do not you think although you are now discharged, I ought to reap the intended benefit? A reply from the feelings of my heart, as I love fair play, was prompt. Undoubtedly, my lord, you ought to be, and shall be in such case discharged, and I will venture to take the burthen upon myself. Certain legal forms I apprehend rendered the discharge of me without conditions unavoidable, but I had previously

refused to accept of myself for nothing, and what I now aim at was understood as an adequate return; 'tis not to be doubted, his lordship's question was built on this ground.

I had uniformly and explicitly declared to the people here, people in the first rank of importance, that nothing short of independence in terms of our alliances could induce America to treat for a truce or a peace, and that no treaty could be had without the consent of our ally first obtained: in a word, if you mean to have a peace you must seek for a general peace. The doctrine was ill relished, especially by those, whose power only could set the machine in motion, but having since my return from Haerlem asserted in very positive terms, that I was confirmed in my former opinions, the late obduracy has been more than a little softened, as you will soon learn from the worthy friend by whom I addressed you on the 7th, who two days ago set out on his return to Passy and Versailles with (as I believe) more permanent commission than the former.

Accept my thanks, Sir, for the kind offer of a supply of money. I know too well how much you have been harrassed for that article, and too well, how low our American finances in Europe are: therefore, if I can possibly avoid it, I will not further trouble you, nor impoverish them, or not till the last extremity: hitherto I have supported myself without borrowing from any body, and I am determined to continue living upon my own stock while it lasts. The stock is indeed small: my expenses have been and shall be in a suitably modest stile. I pray God to bless you: I have the honour to be, Sir, your most obedient servant,

HENRY LAURENS.

P. S. I judged it proper not only to show the peace commission to Lord Shelburne, but to give his lordship a copy of it, from an opinion that it would work no evil being shown elsewhere.

On the 4th May Mr. Oswald returned and brought me the following letter from Lord Shelburne.

DEAR SIR, *Shelburne House, April* 28, 1782.

I have received much satisfaction in being assured by you, that the qualifications of wisdom and integrity, which induced me to make choice of Mr. Oswald, as the fittest instrument for the renewal of our friendly intercourse, have also recommended him so effectually to your approbation and esteem. I most heartily wish that the influence of this first communication of our mutual sentiments may be extended to a happy conclusion of all our public differences.

The candour with which M. le Comte de Vergennes expresses his most Christian Majesty's sentiments and wishes on the subject of a speedy pacification, is a pleasing omen of its accomplishment. His Majesty is not less decided in the same sentiments and wishes, and it confirms his Majesty's ministers in their intention to act in like manner, as most consonant to the true dignity of a great nation.

In consequence of these reciprocal advances Mr. Oswald is sent back to Paris, for the purpose of arranging and settling with you the preliminaries of time and place: and, I have the pleasure to tell you, that Mr. Laurens is already discharged from those engagements, which he entered into, when he was admitted to bail.

It is also determined that Mr. Fox, from whose department that communication is necessarily to proceed, shall send a proper person, who may confer and settle immediately with M. de Vergennes the further measures and proceedings which may be judged proper to adopt towards advancing the prosecution of this important business. In the mean time Mr. Oswald is instructed to communicate to you my thoughts upon the principal objects to be settled.

Transports are actually preparing for the purpose of conveying your prisoners to America, to be there exchanged, and we trust, that you will learn, that due attention has not been wanting to their accommodation and good treatment.

I have the honour to be with very sincere respect, dear Sir, your faithful and obedient servant, SHELBURNE.

Having read the letter, I mentioned to Mr. Oswald the part which refers me to him for his lordship's sentiments. He acquainted me that they were very sincerely disposed to peace; that the whole ministry concurred in the same dispositions; that a good deal of confidence was placed in my character for open honest dealing; that it was also generally believed I had still remaining some part of my ancient affection and regard for Old England, and it was hoped it might appear on this occasion. He then showed me an extract from the minutes of council, but did not leave the paper with me. As well as I remember it was to this purpose.

At a Cabinet Council held April 27, 1782, present—Lord Rockingham, Lord Chancellor, Lord President, Lord Camden, &c. &c. (to the number of fifteen or twenty, being all ministers and great officers of state)

"It was proposed to represent to his Majesty, that it would be well for Mr. Oswald to return to Dr. Franklin and acquaint him, that it is agreed to treat for a general peace, and at Paris; and that the principal points in contemplation are, the allowing of American independence, on condition that England be put into the same situation that she was left in by the peace of 1763."

Mr. Oswald also informed me, that he had conversed with Lord Shelburne on the subject of my paper of notes relating to reconciliation. That he had shown him the paper, and had been prevailed on to leave it with him a night, but it was on his lordship's solemn promise of returning it, which had been complied with, and he now returned it to me. That it seemed to have made an impression, and he had reason to believe that matter might be settled to our satisfaction towards the end of the treaty; but in his mind he wished it might not be mentioned at the beginning. That his lordship indeed said, he had not imagined reparation would be expected; and he wondered I should not know whether it was intended to demand it. Finally Mr. Oswald acquainted me, that as the business, now likely to be brought forward, more particularly appertained to the department of the other secretary Mr. Fox, he was directed to announce another agent coming from that department, who might be expected every day, viz. the Honourable Mr. Grenville, brother of Lord Temple, and son of the famous Mr. George Grenville, formerly Chancellor of the Exchequer.

I immediately wrote the following note to M. le Comte de Vergennes.

SIR, *Passy, May* 4, 1782.

I have the honour to acquaint your Excellency that Mr. Oswald is just returned from London, and now with me. He has delivered me a letter from Lord Shelburne which I inclose for your perusal, together with a copy of my letter to which it is an answer. He tells me, that it has been agreed in council to treat at Paris, and to treat of a *general peace;* and that as it is more particularly in the department of Mr. Fox to regulate the circumstantials, a gentleman, (Mr. Grenville) to be sent by him for that purpose, may be daily expected here. Mr. Oswald will wait on your Excellency whenever you shall think fit to receive him. I am with respect your Excellency's most obedient and most &c. &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

And the next day I received the following answer.

à Versailles, le 5 May, 1782.

J'ai reçu, Monsieur, la lettre que vous m'avez fait l'honneur de m'ecrire le 4 de ce mois, ainsi que celles qui y etoient jointes. Je vous verrai avec plaisir avec votre ami demain matin à onze heures.

J'ai l'honneur d'etre tres sincerement, Monsieur, votre très humble et très obeissant serviteur,

DE VERGENNES.

Accordingly on Monday morning I went with Mr. Oswald to Versailles, and we saw the minister. Mr. Oswald acquainted him with the disposition of his court to treat for a general peace and at Paris; and he announced Mr. Grenville, who he said was to set out about the same time with him, but as he would probably come by way of Ostend, might be a few days longer on the road. Some general conversation passed, agreeable enough, but not of importance. In our return Mr. Oswald repeated to me his opinion, that the affair of Canada would be settled to our satisfaction, and his wish that it might not be mentioned till towards the end of the treaty. He intimated too, that it was apprehended the greatest obstructions in the treaty might come from the part of Spain; but said if she was unreasonable, there were means to bring her to reason; that Russia was a friend to England, had lately made great discoveries on the back of North America, could make establishments there, and might easily transport an army from Kamschatka to the Coast of Mexico, and conquer all those countries. This appeared to me a little visionary at present, but I did not dispute it. On the whole I was able to draw so little from Mr. O. of the sentiments of Lord S. who had mentioned him as entrusted with the communication of them, that I could not but wonder at his being sent again to me, especially as Mr. Grenville was so soon to follow.

On Tuesday I was at court as usual on that day, M. de Vergennes asked me if Mr. Oswald had not opened himself farther to me? I acquainted him with the sight I had had of the minute of council, and of the loose expressions contained in it of what was in contemplation. He seemed to think it odd that he had brought nothing more explicit. I supposed Mr. Grenville might be better furnished.

The next morning I wrote the following letter to Mr. Adams.

SIR, *Passy, May* 8, 1782.

Mr. Oswald, whom I mentioned in a former letter which I find you have received, is returned and brought me another letter from Lord

Shelburne of which the above is a copy. It says, Mr. Oswald is instructed to communicate to me his Lordship's thoughts. He is however very sparing of such communication. All I have got from him is that the ministry have in contemplation the "allowing Independence to America on condition of Britain being put again into the state she was left in by the peace of 1763," which I suppose means being put again in possession of the islands France has taken from her. This seems to me a proposition of selling to us a thing that is already our own, and making France pay the price they are pleased to ask for it. Mr. Grenville who is sent by Mr. Fox is expected here daily. Mr. Oswald tells me that Mr. Laurens will soon be here also. Yours of the 2d instant is just come to hand. I shall write to you on this affair hereafter by the Court couriers, for I am certain your letters to me are opened at the post office either here or in Holland. I suppose mine to you are treated in the same manner. I enclose the cover of your last that you may see the seal. With great respect I am, Sir, your Excellency's &c. &c. B. FRANKLIN.

I had but just sent away this letter, when Mr. Oswald came in, bringing with him Mr. Grenville, who was just arrived. He gave me the following letter from Mr. Secretary Fox.

SIR, *St. James's, May* 1, 1782.

Though Mr. Oswald will no doubt have informed you of the nature of Mr. Grenville's commission, yet I cannot refrain from making use of the opportunity his going offers me, to assure you of the esteem and respect which I have borne to your character, and to beg you to believe, that no change in my situation has made any in those ardent wishes for reconciliation which I have invariably felt from the very beginning of this unhappy contest.

Mr. Grenville is fully acquainted with my sentiments upon this subject, and with the sanguine hopes which I have conceived that those with whom we are contending are too reasonable to continue a contest, which has no longer any object either real or even imaginary.

I know your liberality of mind too well to be afraid lest any prejudices against Mr. Grenville's *name* may prevent you from esteeming those excellent qualities of heart and head which belong to him, or from giving the fullest credit to the sincerity of his wishes for peace, in which no man in either country goes beyond him. I am, with great truth and regard, Sir, your most obedient humble servant,

C. J. Fox.

I imagined the gentlemen had been at Versailles, as I supposed Mr. G. would first have waited on M. de Vergennes, before he called on me. But finding in conversation that he had not, and that he expected me to introduce him, I immediately wrote to that minister, acquainting him that Mr. G. was arrived, and desired to know when his Excellency would think fit to receive him: and I sent an express with my letter. I then entered into conversation with him on the subject of his mission, Mr. Fox having referred me to him as being fully acquainted with his sentiments. He said that peace was really wished for by every body, if it could be obtained on reasonable terms; and as the idea of subjugating America was given up, and both France and America had thereby obtained what they had in view originally, it was hoped that there now remained no obstacle to a pacification. That England was willing to treat of a general peace with all the powers at war against her, and that the treaty should be at Paris. I did not press him much for farther particulars, supposing they were reserved for our interview with M. de Vergennes. The gentlemen did me the honour of staying dinner with me, on the supposition which I urged that my express might be back before we parted. This gave me an opportunity of a good deal of general conversation with Mr. Grenville, who appeared to me a sensible, judicious, intelligent, good-tempered, and well-instructed young man, answering well the character Mr. Fox had given me of him. They left me however about six o'clock, and my messenger did not return till near nine. He brought me the answer of M. le Comte de Vergennes, that he was glad to hear of Mr. Grenville's arrival, and would be ready to receive us to-morrow at half-past 10 or 11 o'clock. I immediately inclosed his note in one to Mr. Grenville, requesting him to be with me at Passy by eight, that we might have time to breakfast, before we set out. I have preserved no copy of these three last mentioned notes, or I should have inserted them, as I think that though they seem of almost too trifling a nature, they serve usefully sometimes to settle dates, authenticate facts, and show something of the turn and manner of thinking of the writers, on particular occasions. The answer I received was as follows:—

"Mr. Grenville presents his compliments to Mr. Franklin, and will certainly do himself the honour of waiting upon Mr. Franklin to-morrow morning at 8 o'clock.

Rue de Richelieu, Wednesday Night."

We set out accordingly the next morning in my coach from Passy, and arrived punctually at M. de Vergennes who received Mr. Grenville in the most cordial

manner, on account of the acquaintance and friendship that had formerly subsisted between his uncle and M. de Vergennes when they were ambassadors together at Constantinople. After some little agreeable conversation, Mr. Grenville presented his letters from Mr. Secretary Fox, and I think from the Duke of Richmond. When these were read the subject of peace was entered on. What my memory retains of the discourse amounts to little more than this, that after mutual declarations of the good disposition of the two Courts, Mr. Grenville having intimated that in case England gave America independence, France, it was expected, would restore the conquests she had made of British Islands, receiving back those of Miquelon and St. Pierre. And the original object of the war being obtained, it was supposed that France would be contented with that. The minister seemed to smile at the proposed exchange. America, says he, does not ask it of you; there is Mr. Franklin, he will answer you as to that point. To be sure, I said, we do not consider ourselves as under any necessity of bargaining for a thing that is our own, which we have bought at the expence of much blood and treasure, and which we are in possession of. As to our being satisfied with the original object of the war, continued he, look back to the conduct of your nation in former wars. In the last war, for example, what was the object? It was the disputed right to some waste lands on the Ohio, and the frontier of Nova Scotia; did you content yourselves with the recovery of those lands? No, you retained at the peace all Canada, all Louisiana, all Florida, Grenada, and other West India islands, the greatest part of Northern Fisheries; with all your conquests in Africa and the East Indies. Something being mentioned of its not being reasonable that a nation, after making an unprovoked and unsuccessful war upon its neighbours, should expect to sit down whole, and have every thing restored which she had lost in such a war, I think Mr. Grenville remarked that the war had been provoked by the encouragement given by France to the Americans to revolt. On which M. de Vergennes grew a little warm, and declared firmly, that the breach was made and our independence declared long before we received the least encouragement from France; and he defied the world to give the smallest proof of the contrary. There sits, says he, Mr. Franklin who knows the fact and can contradict me, if I do not speak the truth. He repeated to Mr. Grenville, what he had before said to Mr. Oswald, respecting the King's intention of treating fairly, and keeping faithfully the conventions he should enter into; of which disposition he should give at the treaty convincing proofs by the fidelity and exactitude with which he should observe his engagements with his present allies; and added that the points which the King had chiefly in view were

justice and *dignity*, these he could not depart from. He acquainted Mr. Grenville that he should immediately write to Spain, and Holland, communicate to those Courts what had passed, and report their answers; that in the mean time he hoped Mr. Grenville would find means of amusing himself agreeably, to which he should be glad to contribute, that he would communicate what had passed to the King, and he invited him to come again the next day.

On our return Mr. G. expressed himself as not quite satisfied with some part of M. de Vergennes' discourse, and was thoughtful. He told me, that he had brought two state messengers with him, and perhaps after he had had another interview with the minister, he might dispatch one of them to London: I then requested leave to answer by that opportunity the letters I had received from Lord Shelburne and Mr. Fox; and he kindly promised to acquaint me the time of the messenger's departure. He did not ask me to go with him the next day to Versailles, and I did not offer it.

The coming and going of these gentlemen was observed, and made much talk at Paris; and the Marquis de la Fayette having learned something of their business from the ministers, discoursed with me about it. Agreeable to the resolutions of Congress directing me to confer with him, and take his assistance in our affairs, I communicated to him what had passed. He told me that, during the treaty at Paris for the last peace, the Duke de Nivernois had been sent to reside in London, that this Court might through him state what was from time to time transacted in the light they thought best, to prevent misrepresentations and misunderstandings. That such an employ would be extremely agreeable to him on many accounts; that as he was now an American citizen, spoke both languages, and was well acquainted with our interests, he believed he might be useful in it; and that as peace was likely from appearances to take place, his return to America was perhaps not so immediately necessary. He then wished I would make him acquainted with Messrs. Oswald and Grenville, and for that end promised meeting them at breakfast with me, which I proposed to contrive if I could, and endeavour to engage them for Saturday.

Friday morning the 10th of May, I went to Paris and visited Mr. Oswald. I found him in the same friendly dispositions, and very desirous of doing good, and of seeing an end put to this ruinous war. But I got no farther light as to the sentiments of Lord S. respecting the terms. I told him the Marquis de la Fayette would breakfast with me to-morrow, and he, Mr. Oswald, might have some curiosity to see a person, who had in this war rendered himself so remarkable. I proposed

him doing me the same honour. He agreed to it cheerfully. I came home, intending to write to Mr. Grenville, whom I supposed might stay and dine at Versailles, and therefore did not call on him. But he was returned, and I found the following note from him.

Paris, May 10.

Mr. Grenville presents his compliments to Mr. Franklin, he proposes sending a courier to England, at 10 o'clock this night, and will give him in charge any letters Mr. Franklin may wish to send by him.

I sat down immediately and wrote the two short letters following, to the Secretaries of State.

To the Right Hon. C. J. Fox, Esq.
Secretary of State.

Sir, *Passy, May* 10, 1782.

I received the letter you did me the honour of writing to me by Mr. Grenville, whom I find to be a very sensible, judicious, and amiable gentleman. The name I assure you does not with me lessen the regard that his excellent qualities inspire. I introduced him as soon as possible to M. de Vergennes; he will himself give you an account of his reception. I hope his coming may forward the blessed work of pacification, in which for the sake of humanity no time should be lost; no reasonable cause, as you observe, existing at present, for the continuance of this abominable war. Be assured of my endeavours to put an end to it. I am much flattered by the good opinion of a person whom I have long highly esteemed, and I hope it will not be lessened by my conduct in the affairs that have given rise to our correspondence. With great respect, I have the honour to be, Sir, &c. &c. B. Franklin.

To Lord Shelburne.

My Lord, *Passy, May* 10, 1782.

I have received the honour of your Lordship's letter dated the 28th past, by Mr. Oswald, informing me that he is sent back to settle with me the preliminaries of time and place. Paris as the place, seemed to me yesterday to be agreed on between Mr. Grenville and M. de Vergennes, and it is perfectly agreeable to me. The time cannot well be settled 'till this Court has received answers from Madrid and the Hague, and until my colleagues are arrived, I expect

daily Messrs. Jay and Laurens: Mr. Adams doubts whether he can be here, but that will not hinder our proceeding.

It gave me great pleasure to hear that Mr. Laurens is discharged entirely from the obligations he had entered into. I am much obliged by the readiness with which your Lordship has conferred that favour. Please to accept my thankful acknowledgments.

I am too happy in understanding from your letter that transports are actually preparing to convey our prisoners to America, and that attention will be paid to their accommodation and good treatment. Those people on their return will be dispersed through every part of America, and the accounts they will have to give of any marks of kindness received by them under the *present* ministry, will lessen much the resentment of their friends against the nation for the hardships they suffered under the *past*.

Mr. Oswald rests here a while by my advice, as I think his presence likely to be useful. With great and sincere respect, I have the honour to be, my Lord, your Lordship's &c. &c. B. FRANKLIN.

And I sent them to Mr. Grenville with the following note.

"Mr. Franklin presents his compliments to Mr. Grenville, with thanks for the information of his courier's departure, and his kind offer of forwarding Mr. F.'s letters, who accepts the favour, and encloses two.

The Marquis de la Fayette and Mr. Oswald, will do Mr. Franklin the honour of breakfasting with him to-morrow between 9 and 10 o'clock. Mr. Franklin will be happy to have the company also of Mr. Grenville, if agreeable to him. He should have waited on Mr. Grenville to-day at Paris, but he imagined Mr. G. was at Versailles.

Passy, Friday Evening, May 10."

To which Mr. G. sent me this answer.

"Mr. Grenville presents his compliments to Mr. Franklin, and will with great pleasure do himself the honour of breakfasting with Mr. Franklin to-morrow between 9 and 10 o'clock.

Mr. Grenville was at Versailles to-day, and should have been sorry that Mr.

Franklin should have given himself the trouble of calling at Paris this morning. The courier shall certainly take particular care of Mr. Franklin's letters.

Paris, Friday Evening."

The gentlemen all met accordingly, had a good deal of conversation at and after breakfast, staid 'till after one o'clock, and parted much pleased with each other.

The Monday following I called to visit Mr. G. and found him with Mr. Oswald, who told me, he was just about returning to London. I was a little surprized at the suddenness of the resolution he had taken, it being as he said to set out the next morning early. I conceived the gentlemen were engaged in business, so I withdrew, and went to write a few letters, among which was the following to Lord Shelburne, being really concerned at the thought of losing so good a man as Mr. Oswald.

To Lord Shelburne.

My Lord, *Passy, May* 13, 1782.

I did myself the honour of writing to your Lordship a few days since by Mr. Grenville's courier, acknowledging the receipt of yours of the 28th past by Mr. Oswald. I then hoped that gentleman would have remained here some time, but his affairs it seems recal him sooner than he imagined. I hope he will return again, as I esteem him more, the more I am acquainted with him, and believe his moderation, prudent counsels, and sound judgment may contribute much, not only to the speedy conclusion of a peace, but to the framing such a peace as may be firm and long-lasting. With great respect, I am, your Lordship's most obedient and most humble servant, B. Franklin.

I went in the evening to Mr. Oswald's lodging with my letters; when he informed me his intention was to return immediately hither from England; and to make the more dispatch in going and returning, he should leave his carriage at Calais, as the embarking and debarking of carriages in the packet-boats often occasioned a tide's delay. I did not enquire the reason of this movement. We had but little conversation, for Mr. Grenville coming in, I soon after wished him a good journey and retired, that I might not interrupt their consultations.

Since his departure Mr. Grenville has made me a visit; and entering into a conversation with me, exactly of the same tenor with the letters I formerly received from Mr. Hartley, stating suppositions that France might insist on points totally

different from what had been the object of our alliance, and that in such case he should imagine we were not at all bound to continue the war to obtain such points for her, &c. I thought I could not give him a better answer to this kind of discourse than what I had given in two letters to Mr. Hartley, and therefore calling for those letters I read them to him. He smiled and would have turned the conversation: but I gave a little more of my sentiments on the general subject of benefits, obligation, and gratitude. I said I thought people had often imperfect notions of their duty on those points, and that a state of obligation was to many so uneasy a state, that they became ingenious in finding out reasons and arguments to prove they had been laid under no obligation at all, or that they had discharged it: and they too easily satisfied themselves with such arguments. To explain clearly my ideas on the subject, I stated a case. A. a stranger to B. sees him about to be imprisoned for a debt by a merciless creditor. He lends him the sum necessary to preserve his liberty. B. then becomes the debtor of A. and after some time repays the money. Has he then discharged the obligation? No. He has discharged the money debt, but the obligation remains, and he is debtor for the kindness of A. in lending the same so seasonably. If B. should afterwards find A. in the same circumstances, that he, B., had been in when A. lent him the money, he may then discharge this obligation or debt of kindness *in part* by lending him an equal sum. *In part*, I said, and not *wholly*, because when A. lent B. the money, there had been no prior benefit received to induce him to it. And therefore, if A. should a second time need the same assistance, I thought B., if in his power, was in duty bound to afford it to him. Mr. Grenville conceived that I was carrying gratitude very far, to apply this doctrine to our situation in respect to France; who was really the party served and obliged by our separation from England, as it lessened the power of her rival and increased her own. I told him I was so strongly impressed with the kind assistance afforded us by France in our distress, and the generous and noble manner in which it was granted without exacting or stipulating for a single privilege or particular advantage to herself in our commerce or otherwise; that I could never suffer myself to think of such reasonings for lessening the obligation, and I hoped, and indeed did not doubt, but my countrymen were all of the same sentiments. Thus he gained nothing of the point he came to push; we parted however in good humour. His conversation is always polite and his manner pleasing.

As he expressed a strong desire to discourse with me on the means of a recon-

ciliation with America, I promised to consider the subject, and appointed Saturday the 1st of June, for our conversation, when he proposed to call on me.

The same day I received another letter from my old friend Mr. Hartley. Our former correspondence on the subject of peace since the beginning of this year, I have kept by itself, as it preceded this, was in the time of the old ministry, and consisted wholly of letters unmixed with personal conversation. This being the first letter from him under the new ministry, and as it may be followed by others which may relate to the negociation, I insert it here,[1] with my answer, and shall continue to insert the future letters I may receive from him relative to the same subject.

To D. Hartley, Esq.

My Dear Friend, *Passy, May* 13, 1782.

I have just received your favour of the 3rd instant. I thank you much for the good news you give me, that "an order is issued by your government for the release of all the American prisoners *every where*, an order not *partial* or *conditional*, but *general* and absolute." I rejoice with you in this step not only on account of the unhappy captives, who by it will be set at liberty, and restored to their friends and families, but as I think it will tend greatly towards a reconciliation, on which alone the hope of a durable peace can be founded. I am much indebted to your good brother, for a very kind and obliging letter, which was mislaid when it should have been answered. I beg you would present to him my thankful acknowledgments, and my very sincere respects. I join with you most heartily in the prayer that ends your letter, *Da pacem, Domine, in diebus nostris!* I am ever, my friend, yours most affectionately, B. Franklin.

Our business standing still at present till the return of Mr. Oswald, gives me a void, that I may fill up with two or three circumstances, not at present connected with this intended treaty, but which serve to show something of the disposition of Courts, who have, or may have, a concern in it.

Mr. Jay had written to me from time to time of the unaccountable delays he had met with since his residence at the Court of Spain, and that he was now no nearer in the business he had been charged with than when he first arrived. Upon the first coming of Mr. Oswald, and the apparent prospect of a treaty, I wrote to press his coming hither, and being a little out of humour with that Court, I said, they

[1] This letter is missing; it was dated May 3, 1782.

have taken four years to consider whether they should treat with us, give them forty, and let us mind our own business; and I sent the letter under cover to a person at Madrid, who I hoped would open and read it. It seems to me that we have in most instances hurt our credit and importance, by sending all over Europe begging alliances, and soliciting declarations of our independence. The nations perhaps from thence seem to think, that our independence is something they have to sell, and that we do not offer enough for it. Mr. Adams has succeeded in Holland, owing to their war with England, and a good deal to the late votes in the Commons towards a reconciliation; but the ministers of the other powers refused, as I hear, to return his visits, because our independence was not yet acknowledged by their Courts. I had heard here by good luck, that the same resolution was taken by several of them not to return the visits I should make them (as they supposed) when I was first received here as Minister Plenipotentiary, and I disappointed their project by visiting none of them. In my private opinion the first civility is due from the old resident to the stranger and new comer. My opinion indeed is good for nothing against custom, which I should have obeyed, but for the circumstances, that rendered it more prudent to avoid disputes and affronts, though at the hazard of being thought rude or singular. While I am writing, something ridiculous enough on this head has happened to me. The Comte du Nord who is son to the Empress of Russia, arriving at Paris, ordered, it seems, cards of visit to be sent to all the foreign ministers. One of them, on which was written Le Comte du Nord et le Prince Bariatinski, was brought to me. It was on Monday evening last. Being at Court the next day I enquired of an old minister, my friend, what was the etiquette, and whether the Comte received visits. The answer was *Non. On se fait ecrire. Voila tout.* This is done here by passing the door, and ordering your name to be written in the porter's book. Accordingly on Wednesday I passed the house of Prince Bariatinski, Ambassador of Russia, where the Comte lodged, and left my name on the list of each. I thought no more of the matter. But this day, May 24, comes the servant who brought the card, and in a great affliction saying he was like to be ruined by his mistake in bringing the card here, and wishing to obtain from me some paper of I know not what kind, for I did not see him. In the afternoon came my friend Mr. Le Roy, who is also a friend of the Prince's, telling me how much he, the Prince, was concerned at the accident; that both himself and the Comte had great personal regard for me, and my character, but that our independence not yet being acknowledged by the Court of Russia it was impossible for him to permit himself to make me a visit as minister. I told Mr. Le Roy it was

not my custom to seek such honours, though I was very sensible of them when conferred upon me; that I should not have voluntarily intruded a visit; and that in this case I had only done what I was informed the etiquette required of me. But if it would be attended with any inconvenience to Prince Bariatinski, whom I much esteemed and respected, I thought the remedy was easy; he had only to raze my name out of his book of visits received, and I would burn their card.

All the northern princes are not ashamed of a little civility committed towards an American. The King of Denmark travelling in England under an assumed name, sent me a card expressing in strong terms his esteem for me, and inviting me to dinner with him at St. James's. And the ambassador from the King of Sweden lately asked me whether I had powers to make a treaty of commerce with their kingdom, for he said his master was desirous of such a treaty with the United States, had directed him to ask me the question, and had charged him to tell me, that it would flatter him greatly to make it with a person whose character he so much esteemed, &c. Such compliments might probably make me a little proud, if we Americans were not naturally as much so already as the porter, who being told he had with his burthen jostled the great Czar Peter (then in London, walking the street) poh! says he, *we are all Czars here.*

I did not write by Mr. Oswald to Mr. Laurens, because from some expressions in his last to me, I expected him here, and I desired Mr. Oswald, if he found him still in London, or met him on the road, to give him that reason. I am disappointed in my expectation, for I have now received (May 25) the following letter from him.

SIR, *Ostend, May* 17, 1782.

I had the honour of addressing you under the 30th ultimo by post, a duplicate of which will accompany this in order to guard against the effect of a miscarriage in the first instance, and I beg leave to refer to the contents.

On the 10th current, and no sooner, your very obliging favour of the 20th preceding reached me in London. Being then on the point of leaving that place, I deferred a reply until my arrival on this side; this happened yesterday too late to catch the post of the day, except by a single letter, put into my hands, I believe, by Doctor Price, which I sent forward. I sincerely and heartily thank you, Sir, for the cordial contents of your last letter, but from the most mature reflection, and taking in consideration my present very infirm state of health, I have resolved to decline accepting the honour intended me by congress in the commission for treat-

ing with Great Britain, and I find the less difficulty in coming to this determination from a persuasion in my own mind that my assistance is not essential, and that it was not the view or expectation of our constituents that every one named in the commission should act. I purpose to repair to, or near to, Mr. Adams, and enquire of him whether I may yet be serviceable under the commission to which I had been first appointed, that, for borrowing money for the use of the United States; if he speaks in the affirmative I shall, though much against my own grain, as is well known at our little court, proceed in the mission with diligence and fidelity; otherwise I shall take a convenient opportunity of returning to give an account there, of having in the course of two years and upwards done nothing, excepting only the making a great number of rebels in the enemy's country, and reconciling thousands to the doctrine of absolute and unlimited independence—a doctrine which I asserted and maintained with as much freedom in the Tower of London, as ever I had done in the State House at Philadelphia, and having contentedly submitted to the loss of my estate, and being ready to lay down my life in support of it, I had the satisfaction of perceiving the coming in of converts every day. I must not however conclude this head without assuring you, that should you think proper to ask questions respecting American commerce, or the interest of any particular state, I will answer with candour, and the best judgment I am possessed of, but of that judgment I sincerely protest I have the utmost diffidence. God prosper your proceedings in the great work; you shall be called blessed by all the grateful of the present generation, and your name will be celebrated by posterity. I feel myself happy in reflecting that in the great outlines for treaty our opinions exactly coincide, that we shall not want the countenance and assistance of our great and good ally, and that you have so honest a man as Mr. Oswald to deal with for preliminaries: I know him to be superior to all chicanery, and am sure he will not defile his mind by attempting any dirty thing.

I intreat you, Sir, to present my humble respects to M. de Vergennes, and thank his Excellency for his polite expressions respecting me, and be so good as to say all that shall appear necessary in excuse for my non-appearance at his court.

Lord Cornwallis called on me the day before I left London, and was, as you may suppose, very anxious to know when he might probably hear from me on the subject of his release: let me therefore request your opinion in answer to what I had the honour of writing in my last concerning that affair. I wish it may prove satisfactory to his lordship, by enabling me, with your consent and concurrence, to cancel a debt which does not sit easy upon, and which cannot, with honour to our

country, remain unpaid. I think we shall not, 'tis impossible we should, incur displeasure, by doing an act of common justice, and our authority may be fairly implied.

His lordship declares he has no intention of returning to America, but desires to be reinstated in his legislative and military characters in his own country, and I am of opinion that in the former station he will be rather friendly to us than otherwise: for my own part, if the war continues, I should not be uneasy if his lordship were to go to Chesapeke again.

I have a thousand compliments and good wishes to present to you from friends in England, where males and females I am sure you have at least so many, your own remembrance will lead you to individuals of your old acquaintance. To-morrow I intend to proceed for Brussels, and thence probably to the Hague and Amsterdam. My movements must unavoidably be as slow as water carriage. My weak under-limbs cannot bear continual thumping on the pavement in the rough machines of this country, and the feebleness of my pocket will not admit the indulgence of a more convenient vehicle. I beg, Sir, you will write to me at the house of Mr. Edmund Jennings, or under the protection of any other friend in that city who will be at the trouble of finding out a voyageur who is at all times, and in all places, with the highest esteem and respect, Sir, your obedient and most humble servant,

HENRY LAURENS.

To the above I wrote the following answer.

TO MR. PRESIDENT, HENRY LAURENS, ESQ.

SIR, *Passy, May 25*, 1782.

I am now honoured with yours of the 17th. I had before received one of the 7th which remained unanswered, because from the words in it, "when I reach the continent, which will probably happen in a few days" I flattered myself with the pleasure of seeing you here. That hope is disappointed by your last, in which you tell me you are determined not to act in the commission for treating of peace with Britain. I regret your taking this resolution; principally because I am persuaded your assistance must have been of great service to your country. But I have besides some private or particular reasons that relate to myself. To encourage me in the arduous task, you kindly tell me I shall be called *blessed, &c.* I have never yet known of a peace made, that did not occasion a great deal of popular discontent, clamour and censure on both sides. This is perhaps owing to

the usual management of the ministers and leaders of the contending nations, who, to keep up the spirits of their people for continuing the war, generally represent the state of their own affairs in a better light, and that of the enemy in a worse, than is consistent with the truth: hence the populace on each side expect better terms than really can be obtained; and are apt to ascribe their disappointment to treachery. Thus the peace of Utrecht, and that of Aix la Chapelle were said in England to have been influenced by French gold, and in France by English guineas. Even the last peace, the most advantageous and glorious for England that ever she made, was, you may remember, violently decried, and the makers as violently abused. So that the blessing promised to peace-makers, I fancy, relates to the next world, for in this they seem to have a greater chance of being cursed. And as another text observes that *in the multitude of counsellors there is safety*, which I think may mean safety to the counsellors as well as to the counselled, because if they commit a fault in counselling the blame does not fall on one or a few, but is divided among many, and the share of each is so much the lighter, or perhaps because when a number of honest men are concerned, the suspicion of their being biassed is weaker as being more improbable; or because *defendit numerus;* for all these reasons, but especially for the support your established character of integrity would afford me against the attacks of my enemies, if this treaty takes place, and I am to act in it, I wish for your presence, and for the presence of as many of the commissioners as possible, and I hope you will re-consider and change your resolution. In the mean time, as you have had opportunities of conversing with the new ministers, and other leading people in England, and of learning their sentiments relating to terms of peace, &c., I request you would inform me by letters of what you think important. Letters from you will come safer by the court courier than by the post; and I desire you would, if you should determine not to act, communicate to me your ideas of the terms to be insisted on, and the points to be attended to, respecting commerce, fisheries, boundaries, &c., every other material circumstance, that may be of importance to all or any of the United States.

Lord Shelburne having written to me on the subject of the wished for peace, I acquainted him in my answer sent by our friend, Mr. Oswald, that you were one of the commissioners appointed by Congress, to treat with Britain, and that I imagined his lordship would therefore think it proper to discharge you entirely from the obligations you entered into when you were admitted to bail, that you might be at liberty to act freely in the commission. He wrote to me in reply that you were

accordingly discharged immediately. His lordship mentioned nothing of any exchange being expected for you; nevertheless I honour your sensibility on the point, and your concern for the credit of America, that she should not be outdone in generosity by Britain, and will cheerfully join with you in any act that you may think proper to discharge in return for the parole of Lord Cornwallis, as far as in our power may lie; but as we have no express authority for that purpose, and the Congress may possibly in the mean time have made some other arrangement relative to his exchange, I conceive that our act should contain a clause reserving to Congress the final approbation or disallowance of the proceeding. And I have some doubt whether Lord Cornwallis will think himself well freed from his engagement and at liberty to exercise his military employments, by virtue of any concessions in his favour, made by persons who are not vested with authority for that purpose. So that on the whole perhaps the best and surest way will be our writing immediately to Congress, and strongly recommending the measure. However, I will do what you shall think best.

I heartily wish you success in any endeavours you may use in Holland for raising a loan of money. We have pressed rather hard on this court, and we still want more than they can conveniently spare us. But I am sorry that too scrupulous a regard to our wants and difficulties should induce you under the present infirmity of your lower limbs, to deny yourself the necessary comfort of an easy carriage, rather than make any use of the public assistance, when the public must be in your debt. I beg you would get over that difficulty and take of me what you may have occasion for.

The letter you forwarded to me, was from America's constant friend the good Bishop of St. Asaph. He speaks of you in terms of the highest esteem and respect.

Mr. Oswald is gone back to London, but intended to return immediately. Mr. Grenville remains here, and has received power to treat, but no farther steps can be taken till Spain and Holland have impowered ministers for the same purpose. I shall inform you and Mr. Adams (if he does not come) of the proceedings from time to time, and request your counsels in case of any difficulty.

I hope you will not think of hazarding a return to America, before a peace, if we find any hopes of its being soon obtained. And that if you do not find you can be useful in the manner you wish in Holland you will make me happy by your company and counsels here.

With great and sincere esteem, I have the honour to be, Sir, &c. &c. B. F.

May 26, I received the following from Mr. Hartley.

FROM DAVID HARTLEY, ESQ. M. P. TO DR. FRANKLIN.

MY DEAR FRIEND, *London, May 19*, 1782.

I writ to you a long letter dated May 1, 1782. by Mr. Laurens who left London on Saturday last, but I will add a few lines now by a conveyance which will I believe overtake him, just to tell you two or three things which I believe I omitted in my last. Perhaps they may not be of any consequence, but as they relate to my own conduct I would wish to have you understand them. After several conferences with the late ministry I gave in the paper called the breviate on the 7th of February; but I never received any answer from them. They resigned on the 20th of March. Upon the accession of the new ministry I heard nothing from them upon the subject; nor did I apply to them. I did not know whether that paper would not come into their hands by succession, and I doubted whether it might not be more proper for me to wait till I heard from them. While I remained doubtful about this, I received your letters which determined me to go to Lord Shelburne. (This was about the beginning of the present month.) I communicated to him some extracts such as those about the prisoners &c, and likewise the whole of your letter of the 13th of April, containing the offer of the late ministry, the king of France's answer, together with your reflections on the conclusion respecting peace. As you had given me a general permission I left with him a copy of the whole letter. Upon the occasion of this interview Lord Shelburne told me that he had made much enquiry in the offices for the correspondences and papers which had passed between the late ministry and me, but that he could not meet with them. He expressed a regret that he had not conversed with me at an earlier day; with many civilities of that kind. In short I had been backward to intrude myself, and he expressed regret that he had not sent to me. Upon this opening on his part, I stated to him the substance of what had passed between the late ministry and myself and I left a copy of the breviate with him. He gave me a very attentive audience, and I took that opportunity of stating my sentiments to him, as far as I could, upon every view of the question. Upon his expressing regret that he had not seen me sooner, I told him that I always had been, and always should be, most ready to give any assistance in my power towards the work of peace. I say the same to you. I do not believe that there is any difference in sentiment between you and me *personally*, in our own minds upon independence, &c. &c. But we belong to different communities, and the right of judgment or of consent and dissent is vested in the community. Divide indepen-

dence into six millions of shares, and you should have been heartily welcome to *my* share from the very beginning of the war. Divide Canada into six millions of shares, I could find a better method of disposing of *my* share, than by offering it to France to abandon America. Divide the rock of Gibraltar into six millions of pieces, I can only answer for one portion. Let reason and equity decide in any such case, as universal umpires between contending parties, and those who wish well to the permanent peace of mankind, will not refuse to give and to receive equal justice.

I agree with you, that the equitable and philosophical principles of politics can alone form a solid foundation of permanent peace, and that the contraries to them, though highly patronized by nations themselves, and their ministers, are no better than vulgar errors. But nations are slow to convictions from the personal arguments of individuals. They are "jealous in honour, seeking that *bubble reputation* even in the cannon's mouth." But until a confirmed Millennium founded upon wiser principles shall be generally established, the reputation of nations is not merely a bubble. It forms their real security. To apply this all in one word, let all nations agree with one accord to beat their swords into plough-shares, and their spears into pruning hooks—or—give me wooden walls to Great Britain. I have nothing farther to add. My reason for writing this was just to communicate to you, in what position I had delivered over my conference and arguments with the late ministry into the hands of the present. And I will conclude with your own words: may God send us all more wisdom. I am ever most affectionately yours, D. HARTLEY.

The same day Mr. Grenville visited me. He acquainted me that his courier was returned, and had brought him full powers to treat for a peace *with France and her allies*. That he had been to Versailles and had shown his power to M. de Vergennes, and left a copy with him. That he had also a letter of credence which he was not to deliver 'till France should think fit to send a minister of the same kind to London; that M. de Vergennes had told him he would lay it before the king, and had desired to see him again on Wednesday. That Mr. Oswald had arrived in London about an hour before the courier came away. That Mr. Fox in his letter had charged him to thank me for that which I had written, and to tell me he hoped I would never forget that he and I were of the same country. I answered that I should always esteem it an honour to be owned as a countryman by Mr. Fox. He had requested at our last interview that if I saw no impropriety in doing it, I would favor him with a sight of the treaty of alliance between France and

America. I acquainted him that it was printed, but if he could not readily meet with a copy, I would have one written for him. And as he had not been able to find one, I this day gave it to him. He lent me a London Gazette, containing Admiral Rodney's account of his victory over M. de Grasse, and the accounts of other successes in the East Indies, assuring me however that those events made not the least change in the sincere desire of his court to treat for peace.

In the afternoon the Marquis de la Fayette called upon me. I acquainted him with what Mr. Grenville had told me respecting his confidential letter, and the expectation that a person on the part of this court would be sent to London with a commission similar to his. The Marquis told me that he was on his way to Versailles, and should see M. de Vergennes. We concluded that it would now be proper for him to make the proposition we had before talked of, that he should be the person employed in that service.

On Monday the 27th I received a letter from Mr. Jay dated the 8th, acquainting me, that he had received mine of the 21st, and 22d past, and had concluded to set out for Paris about the 19th, so that he may be expected in a few days.

I dined this day with Count d'Estaing, and a number of brave marine officers that he had invited. We were all a little dejected and chagrined with the news. I mentioned by way of encouragement the observation of the Turkish Bashaw who was taken with his fleet at Lepanto by the Venitians. "Ships" says he, "are like my master's beard, you may cut it, but it will grow again. He has cut off from your government all the Morea, which is like a limb that you will never recover." And his words proved true.

On Tuesday I dined at Versailles with some friends, so was not at home when the Marquis de la Fayette called to acquaint me, that M. de V. informed him that the full power received by Mr. Grenville from London, related to France only. The Marquis left for me this information, which I could not understand.

On Wednesday I was at court and saw the copy of the power. It appeared full with regard to treating with France, but mentioned not a word of her allies. And as M. de Vergennes had explicitly and constantly from the beginning declared to the several messengers, Mr. Forth, Mr. Oswald, and Mr. Grenville, that France could only treat in concert with her allies, and it had in consequence been declared on the part of the British ministry, that they consented to treat for a general peace, and at Paris, the sending this partial power appeared to be invidious, and a mere invention to occasion delay, the late disaster to the French fleet having probably given the court of England fresh courage, and other views.

M. de Vergennes said he should see Mr. Grenville on Thursday, and would speak his mind to him on the subject very plainly. "They want," says he, "to treat with us for you; but this the king will not agree to. He thinks it not consistent with the dignity of your state. You will treat for yourselves: and every one of the powers at war with England will make its own treaty. All that is necessary to be observed for our common security is, that the treaties go hand in hand, and are signed all on the same day."

Prince Bariatinski, the Russian ambassador, was particularly civil to me this day at court; apoligized for what had passed relating to the visit, expressed himself extremely sensible of my friendship in covering the affair, which might have occasioned to him very disagreeable consequences &c. The Compte du Nord, came to M. de Vergennes's while we were taking coffee after dinner. He appears lively and active. There was an opera at night for his entertainment. The house being richly finished with abundance of carving and gilding, well illuminated with wax tapers, and the company all superbly dressed, many of the men in cloth of tissue, and the ladies sparkling with diamonds, formed altogether the most splendid spectacle my eyes ever beheld.

I had some little conference to day with M. M. Berkenrode, Vanderpierre, and Boeris, the ambassadors of Holland, and the agents of the Dutch East India Company. They informed me that the second letter of Mr. Fox to the mediating minister of Russia, proposing a separate peace with Holland, made no more impression than the first, and no peace would be made but in concurrence with France.

The Swedish minister told me, he expected orders from his court relative to a treaty, &c.

I had at our last interview given Mr. Grenville a rendezvous for Saturday morning, and having some other engagements for Thursday and Friday, though I wished to speak with him on the subject of his power, I did not go to him, but waited his coming to me on Saturday. On Friday May 31, Mr. Oswald called on me, being just returned, and brought me the following letter from D. Hartley Esq, and two letters from Lord Shelburne, the first of which had been written before Mr. O's arrival in London.

FROM DAVID HARTLEY, ESQ. M. P. TO DR. FRANKLIN.

MY DEAR FRIEND, *London, May* 25, 1782.

Yours of the 13th instant I received by Mr. Oswald. I did

not doubt but that the news of a general and absolute release of the American prisoners which Lord Shelburne was so good to communicate to me, in answer to that part of your letter of the 5th of April in which you speak so pathetically of *sweet reconciliation*, would give you much sincere and heartfelt pleasure. God send that it may be the happy omen of final *reconciliation* and *durable peace*. I should be very happy to hear that good news from you, and in any way to contribute to it. Having on that subject communicated, the preliminaries dated May 1782, to Lord Shelburne, you may be assured that I have no reservations upon that head respecting America, in any circumstances or condition whatever. You know all my thoughts upon that subject, and the principles upon which they are founded, and therefore that they are not changeable.

It would give me the greatest pleasure if I could hope for any opportunity of seeing you. I could say many things which are otherwise incommunicable, and which perhaps would contribute to facilitate the road to peace. I think I see, in many parts, much matter to work with, out of which a peace, honourable to all parties, and upon durable principles, might be established.—*No degrading or mortifying conditions, to shorten peace and rekindle war.* Perhaps I might not say too much if I were to add that simply the adoption of *reason* among nations, and the mere rectification of obsolete and gothic absurdities, which carry no gratification, would afford a fund of remuneration to all parties for renouncing those objects of mutual contention, which, *in the eye of reason*, are no better than creatures of passion, jealousy and false pride. Until the principles of *reason* and equity shall be adopted in national transactions, peace will not be durable amongst men.

These are reflections general to all nations. As to the mutual concerns between G. B. and N. A., *reconciliation* is the touch-stone to prove those hearts which are without alloy. If I can be of any assistance to you in any communications or explanations conducive to peace, you may command my utmost services. Even if a French minister were to over hear such an offer, let him not take it in jealous part. Zealously and affectionately attached to my own country and to America, I am nevertheless most perfectly of accord with you, that justice and honour should be observed towards all nations. Mr. Oswald will do me the favour to convey this to you. I heartily wish him success in his pacific embassy. Yours ever most affectionately, G. B.

Preliminaries (mentioned above) May 1782.

1. That the British troops shall be withdrawn from the thirteen provinces of

North America, and a truce made between Great Britain and the said provinces for [1]—years.

2. That a negociation for peace shall bonâ fide be opened between Great Britain and the allies of America.

3. If the proposed negociation between Great Britain and the allies of America should not succeed so as to produce peace, but that war should continue between the said parties; that America should act and be treated as a neutral nation.

4. That whenever peace shall take place between Great Britain and the allies of America, the truce between Great Britain and America shall be converted into a perpetual peace, the independence of America shall be admitted and guaranteed by Great Britain and a commercial treaty settled between them.

5. That these propositions shall be made to the court of France for communication to the American commissioners, and for an answer to the court of Great Britain.

FROM LORD SHELBURNE, TO B. FRANKLIN, ESQ.

SIR, *Whitehall, May* 21, 1782.

I am honoured with your letter of the 11th instant, and am very glad to find, that the conduct which the king has empowered me to observe towards Mr. Laurens and the American prisoners has given you pleasure.

I have signified to Mr. Oswald his Majesty's pleasure, that he shall continue at Paris till he receives orders from hence to return.

In the present state of this business there is nothing left for me to add but my sincere wishes for a happy issue, and to repeat my assurances, that nothing shall be wanting on my part, which can contribute to it.

I have the honour to be, with very great regard, Sir, your most obedient humble servant, SHELBURNE.

FROM LORD SHELBURNE TO B. FRANKLIN, ESQ.

SIR, *Whitehall, May* 26, 1782.

I have the honour to receive your letter of the 13th May by Mr. Oswald.

It gives me great pleasure to find my opinion of the moderation, prudence, and judgment of that gentleman confirmed by your concurrence. For I am glad to

[1] Suppose ten or twenty years.

assure you, that we likewise concur in hoping that those qualities may enable him to contribute to the speedy conclusion of a peace, and such a peace as may be firm and long lasting. In that hope he has the king's orders to return immediately to Paris, and you will find him, I trust, properly instructed to co-operate to so desirable an object.

I have the honour to be, with very sincere respect and esteem, dear Sir, your most obedient, humble servant, SHELBURNE.

I had not then time to converse with Mr. Oswald and he promised to come and breakfast with me on Monday.

Saturday June 1st, Mr. Grenville came according to appointment. Our conversation began by my acquainting him that I had seen M. de Vergennes, and had perused the copy left with him of the power to treat. That after what Mr. Grenville had told me, of its being to treat with France *and her allies*, I was a little surprized to find in it no mention of the allies, and that it was only to treat with the king of France and his ministers: that at Versailles there was some suspicion of its being intended to occasion delay, the professed desire of speedy peace being perhaps abated in the British court since its late successes; but that I imagined the words relating to the allies might have been accidentally omitted in transcribing, or that perhaps he had a special power to treat with us distinct from the other. He answered, that the copy was right, and that he had no such special power in form, but that his instructions were full to that purpose, and that he was sure the ministers had no desire of delay, nor any of excluding us from the treaty, since the greatest part of those instructions related to treating with me. That to convince me of the sincerity of his court respecting us, he would acquaint me with one of his instructions, though perhaps the doing it now was premature and therefore a little inconsistent with the character of a politician, but he had that confidence in me, that he should not hesitate to inform me (though he wished that at present it should go no farther) he was instructed to acknowledge the independence of America, previous to the commencement of the treaty. And he said, he could only account for the omission of America in the power, by supposing that it was an old official form copied from that given to Mr. Stanley when he came over hither before the last peace. Mr. Grenville added that he had immediately after his interview with M. de Vergennes dispatched a courier to London, and hoped that with his return the difficulty would be removed. That he was perfectly assured their late success had made no change in the disposition of his court to peace; and

that he had more reason than M. de Vergennes to complain of delay, since five days were spent before he could obtain a passport for his courier, and then it was not to go and return by way of Calais, but to go by Ostend, which would occasion a delay of five days longer. Mr. Grenville then spoke much of the high opinion the present ministry had of me, and their great esteem for me; their desire of a perfect reconciliation between the two countries, and the firm and general belief in England, that no man was so capable as myself of proposing the proper means of bringing about such a reconciliation; adding, that if the old ministers had formerly been too little attentive to my counsels, the present were very differently disposed, and he hoped that in treating with them I would totally forget their predecessors. The time has been when such flattering language from great men, might have made me vainer, and had more effect on my conduct than it can at present, when I find myself so near the end of life, as to esteem lightly all personal interests and concerns, except that of maintaining to the last, and leaving behind me, the tolerably good character I have hitherto supported.

Mr. G. then discoursed of our resolution not to treat without our allies. This, says he, can properly only relate to France, with whom you have a treaty of alliance, but you have none with Spain, you have none with Holland. If Spain and Holland, and even if France should insist on unreasonable terms of advantage to themselves, after you have obtained all you want, and are satisfied, can it be right that America should be dragged on in a war of their interests only? He stated this matter in various lights and pressed it earnestly. I resolved from various reasons to evade the discussion, therefore answered, that the intended treaty not being yet begun, it appeared unnecessary to enter at present into considerations of that kind. The preliminaries being once settled and the treaty commenced, if any of the other powers should make extravagant demands on England, and insist on our continuing the war till those were complied with, it would then be time enough for us to consider what our obligations were, and how far they extended. The first thing necessary was for him to procure the full powers, the next for us to assemble the plenipotentiaries of all the belligerent parties, and then propositions might be mutually made, received, considered, answered, or agreed to. In the mean time I would just mention to him, that though we were yet under no obligations to Spain by treaty, we were under obligations of gratitude for the assistance she had afforded us; and as Mr. Adams had some weeks since commenced a treaty in Holland, the terms of which I was not yet acquainted with, I knew not but that we might have already some alliance and obligations contracted there. And perhaps we ought

however to have some consideration for Holland on this account; that it was in vengeance for the friendly disposition shown by some of her people to make a treaty of commerce with us, that England had declared the war against her. He said it would be hard upon England, if having given reasonable satisfaction to one or two of her four enemies, she could not have peace with those till she had complied with whatever the others might demand, however unreasonable; for so she might be obliged to pay for every article four-fold. I observed that when she made her propositions, the more advantageous they were to each, the more it would be the interest of each to prevail with the others to accept those offered to them. We then spoke of the reconciliation, but his full power not being yet come, I chose to defer entering upon that subject at present. I told him I had thoughts of putting down in writing the particulars that I judged would conduce to that end, and of adding my reasons; that this required a little time and I had been hindered by accidents, which was true, for I had begun to write, but had postponed it on account of his defective power to treat. But I promised to finish it as soon as possible. He pressed me earnestly to do it, saying an expression of mine in a former conversation that "there still remained *roots of good will* in America towards England, which if properly taken care of might produce a reconciliation," had made a great impression on his mind, and given him infinite pleasure, and he hoped I would not neglect furnishing him with the information of what would be necessary to nourish those roots, and could assure me, that my advice would be greatly regarded.

Mr. Grenville had shown me at our last interview a letter from the Duke of Richmond to him, requesting him to prevail with me, to disengage a Captain Macleod of the artillery from his parole, the Duke's brother, Lord George Lenox being appointed to the command of Portsmouth, and desiring to have him as his aid-de-camp. I had promised to consider of it, and this morning I sent him the following letter.

SIR, *Passy, May* 31, 1782.

I do not find that I have any express authority to absolve a parole given by an English officer in America. But desirous of complying with a request of the Duke of Richmond as far as in my power, and being confident that the Congress will be pleased with whatever may oblige a personage they so much respect, I do hereby consent that Captain Macleod serve in his military capacity, in England only, till the pleasure of the Congress is known, to whom I will write

immediately, and who I make no doubt will discharge him entirely. I have the honour to be, &c. &c. B. FRANKLIN.

America had been constantly befriended in parliament by the Duke of Richmond, and I believed the Congress would not be displeased that this opportunity was taken of obliging him, and that they would by their approbation, supply the deficiency of my power. Besides, I could not well refuse it after what had passed between Mr. Laurens and me, and what I had promised to do for the satisfaction of that gentleman.

Sunday, June 2. The Marquis de la Fayette called and dined with me. He is uneasy about the delay, as he cannot resolve concerning his voyage to America, till some certainty appears of there being a treaty, or no treaty.

This day, I wrote the following letter to Mr. Adams.

SIR, *Passy, June 2*, 1782.

Since mine of May 8 I have not had any thing material to communicate to your Excellency. Mr. Grenville indeed arrived just after I had dispatched that letter, and I introduced him to M. de Vergennes; but as his mission seemed only a repetition of that by Mr. Oswald, the same declarations of the King of England's sincere desire of peace, and willingness to treat of a general pacification with all the powers at war, and to treat at Paris, which were answered by the same declarations of the good dispositions of this Court; and that it could not treat without the concurrence of its allies, I omitted writing till something should be produced from a kind of agreement, that M. de Vergennes would acquaint Spain and Holland of the overture, and that Mr. Grenville would write for full powers to treat and make propositions, &c. nothing of importance being in the mean time to be transacted.

Mr. Grenville accordingly dispatched a messenger for London, who returned in about twelve days. Mr. G. called on me after having been at Versailles, and acquainted me, that he had received the power, and had left a copy of it with M. de Vergennes, and that he was thereby authorized to treat with France and her *allies*. The next time I went to Versailles I desired to see that copy, and was surprized to find in it no mention of the allies of France or any one of them; and on speaking with M. de Vergennes about it, I found he began to look upon the whole as a piece of artifice to amuse us, and gain time, since he had uniformly declared to every agent who had appeared here, viz. to Forth, Oswald, and

Grenville, that the King would not treat without the concurrence of his allies, and yet England had given a power to treat with France only, which showed that she did not intend to treat at all, but meant to continue the war. I had not till yesterday an opportunity of talking with Mr. Grenville on the subject, and expressing my wonder, after what he told me, that there should be no mention made of our states in his Commission: he could not explain this to my satisfaction, but said he believed the omission was occasioned by their copying an old commission given to Mr. Stanley at the last treaty of peace, for that he was sure, the intention was, that he should treat with us, his instructions being fully to that purpose. I acquainted him that I thought a special commission was necessary, without which we could not treat with him. I imagine that there is a reluctance in their King to take this first step, as the giving such a commission would itself be a kind of acknowledgment of our Independence; their late success against Count de Grasse may also have given them hopes that by delay, and more successes they may make that acknowledgment and a peace less necessary.

Mr. Grenville has written to his Court for farther instructions. We shall see what the return of his couriers will produce. If full power to treat with each of the powers at war against England does not appear, I imagine the negociation will be broken off.

Mr. G. in his conversations with me, insists much on our being under no engagements not to make peace without Holland. I have answered that I know not but you may have entered into some, and that if there should be none, a general pacification made at the same time, would be best for us all; and that I believe neither Holland nor We could be prevailed on to abandon our friends. What happens farther shall be immediately communicated. Be pleased to present my respects to Mr. Laurens, to whom I wrote some days since. Mr. Jay I suppose is on his way hither. With great respect, I have the honour to be, Sir, your Excellency's &c. &c. &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

On Monday the 3rd Mr. Oswald came according to appointment. He told me he had seen and had conversations with Lord Shelburne, Lord Rockingham, and Mr. Fox. That their desire of peace continued uniformly the same, though he thought some of them were a little too much elated with the late victory in the West Indies; and when observing his coolness they asked him, if he did not think it a very good thing; yes, says he, if you do not rate it too high. He went on with the utmost frankness to tell me, that the peace was absolutely necessary for them.

That the nation had been foolishly involved in four wars, and would no longer raise money to carry them on, so that if they continued it would be absolutely necessary to stop payment of the interest money on the funds, which would ruin their future credit. He spoke of stopping on all sums above 1000*l.* and continuing to pay on those below; because the great sums belonged to the rich, who could better bear the delay of their interest; and the smaller sums to poorer persons who would be more hurt, and make more clamour; and that the rich might be quieted by promising them interest upon their interest. All this looked as if the matter had been seriously thought on: Mr. Oswald has an air of great simplicity and honesty, yet I could hardly take this to be merely a weak confession of their deplorable state; and thought it might be intended as a kind of intimidation, by showing us that they had still that resource in their power, which he said would furnish five millions a year. But he added, our enemies may now do what they please with us, *they have the ball at their foot*, was his expression, and we hope they will show their moderation, and their magnanimity. He then repeatedly mentioned the great esteem the ministers had for me, that they with all the considerate people of England looked to and depended on me for the means of extricating the nation from its present desperate situation, and that perhaps no single man had ever in his hands an opportunity of doing so much good, as I had at this present, with much more to that purpose: he then showed me a letter to him from Lord Shelburne, partly I suppose that I might see his Lordship's opinion of me, which as it has some relation to the negociation is here inserted. He left it with me requesting that I would communicate it to Mr. Walpole.

SIR, *Whitehall, May* 21, 1782.

It has reached me that Mr. Walpole esteems himself much injured by your going to Paris, and that he conceives it was a measure of mine intended to take the present negociation with the Court of France out of his hands, which he conceives to have been previously commenced through his channel by Mr. Fox. I must desire that you will have the goodness to call upon Mr. Walpole, and explain to him distinctly, how very little foundation there is for so unjust a suspicion, as I know of no such intercourse. Mr. Fox declares, he considered what had passed between him and Mr. Walpole of a mere private nature, not sufficiently material to mention to the King or the cabinet, and will write to Mr. Walpole to explain this distinctly to him. But if you find the least suspicion of this kind has reached Dr. Franklin, or M. le Comte de Vergennes, I desire this matter may be

clearly explained to both. I have too much friendship for Dr. Franklin, and too much respect for the character of M. le Comte de Vergennes with which I am perfectly acquainted, to be so indifferent to the good opinion of either, as to suffer them to believe me capable of an intrigue, where I have both professed and observed a direct opposite conduct. In truth I hold it in such perfect contempt, that however proud I may be to serve the King in my present station or in any other, and however anxious I may be to serve my country, I should not hesitate a moment about retiring from any situation which required such services. But I must do the King the justice to say, that his Majesty abhors them, and I need not tell you, that it is my fixed principle that no country in any moment can be advantaged by them. I am, with great truth and regard, Sir, your most obedient humble servant, SHELBURNE.

Richard Oswald, Esq.

In speaking farther of the ministry's opinion of the great service it might be in my power to render, Mr. Oswald said he had told them in one of his conversations, that nothing was to be expected of me but consistence, nothing unsuitable to my character, or inconsistent with my duty to my country; I did not ask him the particular occasion of his saying this, but thought it looked a little as if something inconsistent with my duty had been talked of or proposed.

Mr. Oswald also gave me a copy of a paper of memorandums written by Lord Shelburne, viz.

1. That I am ready to correspond more particularly with Dr. Franklin if wished.

2. That the *enabling act* is passing with the insertion of Commissioners recommended by Mr. Oswald, and on our part Commissioners will be named, or any character given to Mr. Oswald, which Dr. Franklin and he may judge conducive to a final settlement of things between Great Britain and America. Which Dr. Franklin very properly says requires to be treated in a very different manner from the peace between Great Britain and France, who have been always at enmity with each other.

3. That an establishment for the loyalists must always be upon Mr. Oswald's mind, as it is uppermost in Lord Shelburne's, besides other steps in their favour, to influence the several States to agree to a fair restoration or compensation for whatever confiscations have taken place.

4. To give Lord Shelburne's letter about Mr. Walpole to Dr. Franklin.

On perusing this paper, I recollected that a bill had been some time since proposed in parliament *to enable his Majesty to conclude a peace or truce with the revolted Colonies in America,* which I supposed to be the *enabling* bill mentioned; that had hitherto slept, and not having been passed was perhaps the true reason why the Colonies were not mentioned in Mr. Grenville's commission. Mr. Oswald thought it likely, and said that the words " insertion of Commissioners recommended by Mr. Oswald" related to his advising an express mention in the bill of the commissioners appointed by Congress to treat of peace, instead of the vague denominations of *any person or persons*, &c. in the first draft of the bill. As to the loyalists I repeated what I said to him when first here, that their estates had been confiscated by the laws made in the particular States where the delinquents had resided, and not by any law of Congress, who indeed had no power either to make such laws, or to repeal them, or to dispense with them, and therefore could give no power to their Commissioners to treat of a restoration for those people: that it was an affair appertaining to each State. That if there were justice in compensating them, it must be due from England rather than from America; but in my opinion England was not under any very great obligations to them, since it was by their misrepresentations and bad counsels that she had been drawn into this miserable war. And that if an account was to be brought against us for their losses, we should more than balance it, by an account of the ravages they had committed all along the coasts of America. Mr. Oswald agreed to the reasonableness of all this, and said he had, before he came away, told the ministers, that he thought no recompence to those people was to be expected from us; that he had also, in consequence of our former conversation on that subject, given it as his opinion that Canada should be given up to the United States, as it would prevent the occasions of future difference, and as the government of such a country was worth nothing, and of no importance if they could have there a free commerce; that the Marquis of Rockingham and Lord Shelburne, though they spoke reservedly, did not seem very averse to it; but that Mr. Fox seemed startled at the proposition. He was however not without hopes that it would be agreed to.

We now came to another article of the note, viz. " On our part Commissioners will be named, or any character given to Mr. Oswald which Dr. Franklin and he may judge conducive to a final settlement of things between Great Britain and America." This he said was left entirely to me, for he had no will in the affair; he did not desire to be farther concerned than to see it *en train;* he had no personal views either of honour or profit. He had now seen and conversed with

Mr. Grenville, thought him a very sensible young gentleman, and very capable of the business; he did not therefore see any farther occasion there was for himself; but if I thought otherwise, and conceived he might be farther useful, he was content to give his time and service in any character or manner I should think proper. I said his knowledge of America, where he had lived, and with every part of which and of its commerce and circumstances he was well acquainted, made me think that in persuading the ministry to things reasonable relating to that country, he could speak or write with more weight than Mr. Grenville, and therefore I wished him to continue in the service: and I asked him whether he would like to be joined in a general commission for treating with all the powers at war with England, or to have a special commission to himself for treating with America only: he said he did not chuse to be concerned in treating with the foreign powers, for he was not sufficiently a master of their affairs, or of the French language, which probably would be used in treating; if therefore he accepted of any commission it should be that of treating with America. I told him I would write to Lord Shelburne on the subject, but Mr. Grenville having some time since dispatched a courier partly on account of the commission, who was not yet returned, I thought it well to wait a few days till we could see what answer he would bring or what measures were taken; this he approved of. The truth is, he appears so good and so reasonable a man, that though I have no objection to Mr. Grenville, I should be loth to lose Mr. Oswald. He seems to have nothing at heart but the good of mankind, and putting a stop to mischief; the other, a young statesman, may be supposed to have naturally a little ambition of recommending himself as an able negociator.

In the afternoon Mr. Boeris of Holland, called on me and acquainted me that the answer had not yet been given to the last memorial from Russia, relating to the mediation; but it was thought it would be in respectful terms to thank her Imperial Majesty for her kind offers, and to represent the propriety of their connection with France in endeavours to obtain a general peace, and that they conceived it would be still more glorious for her Majesty to employ her influence in procuring a general than a partial pacification. Mr. Boeris farther informed me, that they were not well satisfied in Holland with the conduct of the Russian Court, and suspected views of continuing the war for particular purposes.

Tuesday, June 4. I received another packet from Mr. Hartley. It consisted of duplicates of the former letters and papers already inserted, and contained nothing new but the following letter from Colonel Hartley, his brother, viz.

DEAR SIR, *Soho Square, May 24, 1782.*

It is with the greatest pleasure I take up my pen to acknowledge your remembrance of me in yours to my brother, and to thank you for those expressions of regard which I can assure you are mutual. My brother has desired me to copy some letters and papers by way of sending you duplicates. I am particularly happy at the employment, because the greatest object of my parliamentary life has been to co-operate with him in his endeavours to put a period to this destructive war, and forward the blessed work of peace. I hope to see him again in that situation where he can so well serve his country with credit to himself, and while I have the honour of being in parliament, my attention will be continued to promote the effects, which will naturally flow from those principles of freedom and universal philanthropy you have both so much supported. While I copy his words my own feelings and judgment are truly in unison, and I have but to add the most ardent wish that peace and happiness may crown the honest endeavours towards so desirable an end. I am, dear Sir, with the greatest respect and esteem, yours sincerely, W. H. HARTLEY.

Dr. Franklin.

Wednesday, June 5. Mr. Oswald called again to acquaint me that Lord Cornwallis being very anxious to be discharged from his parole as soon as possible, had sent me a Major Ross hither to solicit it, supposing Mr. Laurens might be here with me. Mr. Oswald told me, what I had not before heard, that Mr. Laurens while prisoner in the tower, had proposed obtaining the discharge of Lord Cornwallis in exchange for himself, and had promised to use his utmost endeavours to that purpose, in case he was set at liberty, not doubting the success. I communicated to Mr. Oswald what had already passed between Mr. Laurens and me respecting Lord Cornwallis; which appears in the preceding letters, and told him, I should have made less difficulty about the discharge of his parole, if Mr. Laurens had informed me of his being set at liberty in consequence of such an offer and promise; and I wished him to state this in a letter to me, that it might appear for my justification in what I might with Mr. Laurens do in the affair; and that he would procure for me from Major Ross a copy of the parole, that I might be better acquainted with the nature of it. He accordingly in the afternoon sent me the following letter.

SIR, *Paris, June 5,* 1782.

While Mr. Laurens was under confinement in England, he promised, that on condition of his being liberated upon his parole, he would apply to you for an exchange in favour of my Lord Cornwallis, by a discharge of his Lordship's granted upon the surrender of his garrison at the village of York in Virginia: and, in case of your being under any difficulty in making such exchange, he undertook to write to the Congress, and to request it of that Assembly; making no doubt of obtaining a favourable answer without loss of time.

This proposal, signed by Mr. Laurens's hand, I carried and delivered, I think, in the month of December last, to his Majesty's then Secretaries of State, which was duly attended to; and in consequence thereof, Mr. Laurens was soon after set at full liberty. And though not a prisoner under parole, yet it is to be hoped a variation in the mode of discharge will not be supposed of any essential difference.

And with respect to Mr. Laurens, I am satisfied he will consider himself as much interested in the success of this application as if his own discharge had been obtained under the form as proposed by the representation which I delivered to the Secretaries of State; and I make no doubt will sincerely join my Lord Cornwallis in an acknowledgment of your favour and good offices in granting his Lordship a full discharge of his parole abovementioned. I have the honour to be, with much respect, Sir, your most obedient humble servant, RICHARD OSWALD.

P. S. Major Ross has got no copy of Lord Cornwallis's parole. He says it was in the common form, as in like cases.

Since writing the above, I recollect I was under a mistake, as if the proposal of exchange came first from Mr. Laurens; whereas it was made by his Majesty's Secretaries of State to me, that Mr. Laurens should endeavour to procure the exchange of Lord Cornwallis, so as to be discharged himself. Which proposal I carried to Mr. Laurens, and had from him the obligation abovementioned, upon which the mode of his discharge was settled. R. O.

To which I wrote this answer.

SIR, *Passy, June 6,* 1782.

I received the letter you did me the honour of writing to me, respecting the parole of Lord Cornwallis. You are acquainted with what I wrote some time since to Mr. Laurens. To-morrow is post day from Holland, when possibly I may receive an answer, with a paper drawn up by him for the purpose

of discharging that parole, to be signed by us jointly. I suppose the staying at Paris another day will not be very inconvenient to Major Ross; and if I do not hear to-morrow from Mr. Laurens, I will immediately, in compliance with your request, do what I can towards the liberation of Lord Cornwallis. I have the honour to be, with great respect, Sir, your most obedient humble servant,

R. Oswald, Esq. B. FRANKLIN.

Friday, June 7. Major Ross called upon me, to thank me for the favourable intentions I had expressed in my letter to Mr. Oswald respecting Lord Cornwallis, and to assure me his Lordship would for ever remember it with gratitude, &c. I told him it was our duty to alleviate as much as we could the calamities of war; that I expected letters from Mr. Laurens relating to the affair, after the receipt of which I would immediately compleat it. Or if I did not hear from Mr. L. I would speak to the Marquis de la Fayette, get his approbation, and finish it without farther waiting.

Saturday, June 8. I received some newspapers from England, in one of which is the following paragraph.

Extract from the London Evening Post of May 30, 1782.

"If reports on the spot speak truth, Mr. Grenville, in his first visit to Dr. Franklin, gained a considerable point of information as to the powers America had retained for treating *separately* with Great Britain, in case her claims or demands were granted.

The treaty of February 6, 1778, was made the basis of this conversation; and by the spirit and meaning of this treaty, there is no obligation on America not to treat separately for peace, after she is assured England will grant her independence, and a free commerce with all the world.

The first article of that treaty engages America and France to be bound to each other as long as *circumstances* may require; therefore the granting America all that she asks of England, is breaking the bond by which the *circumstances* may bind America to France.

The second article says, the meaning and direct end of the alliance is, to insure the freedom and independence of America. Surely, then, when freedom and independence is allowed by Britain, America may or may not, as she chuses, put an end to the present war between England and America, and leave France to war

on through all her mad projects of reducing the power and greatness of England, while America feels herself possessed of what she wishes.

By the eighth article of the treaty neither France or America can conclude peace without the assent of the other; and they engage not to lay down their arms, until the independence of America is acknowledged; but this article does not exclude America from entering into a separate treaty for peace with England, and evinces more strongly than the former article, that America may enter into a separate treaty with England, when she is convinced that England has insured to her, *all that she can* reasonably ask."

I conjecture that this must be an extract from a letter of Mr. Grenville's. But it carries an appearance as if he and I had agreed in these imaginary discourses of America's being at liberty to make peace without France, &c. Whereas my whole discourse in the strongest terms declared our determinations to the contrary, and the impossibility of our acting not only contrary to the treaty, but the duties of gratitude and honour, of which nothing is mentioned. This young negociator seems to value himself on having obtained from me a copy of the treaty. I gave it him freely, at his request; it being not so much a secret as he imagined, having been printed, first in all the American papers, soon after it was made; then at London in Almon's Remembrancer, which I wonder he did not know; and afterwards in a collection of the American Constitutions published by order of Congress. As such imperfect accounts of our conversations find their way into the English papers, I must speak to this gentleman of its impropriety.

Sunday, June 9. Dr. Bancroft being intimately acquainted with Mr. Walpole, I this day gave him Lord Shelburne's letter to Mr. Oswald, requesting he would communicate it to that gentleman. Dr. Bancroft said it was believed, both Russia and the Emperor wish the continuance of the war, and aimed at procuring for England a peace with Holland, that England might be better able to continue it against France and Spain.

The Marquis de la Fayette having proposed to call on me to-day, I kept back the discharge of Lord Cornwallis, which was written and ready, desiring to have his approbation to it, as he had in a former conversation advised it. He did not come, but late in the evening sent me a note, acquainting me, that he had been prevented by accompanying the Great Duke to the review, but would breakfast with me to-morrow morning.

This day I received a letter from Mr. Dana, dated at St. Petersburgh, April 29, in which is the following passage. "We yesterday received the news that the

States General had on the 19th of this month (N. S.) acknowledged the independence of the United States. This event gave a shock here, and is not well received, as they at least profess to have flattered themselves that the mediation would have prevented it, and otherwise brought on a partial peace between Britain and Holland. This resentment will not be productive of any ill consequences to the Dutch republic." It is true that while the war continues Russia feels a greater demand for the naval stores, and perhaps at a higher price: but is it possible that for such petty interests mankind can wish to see their neighbours destroy each other? Or, has the project lately talked of, some foundation, that Russia and the Emperor intend driving the Turks out of Europe; and do they therefore wish to see France and England so weakened as to be unable to assist those people?

Monday, June 10. The Marquis de la Fayette did not come till between 11 and 12. He brought with him Major Ross. After breakfast he told me (Major Ross being gone into another room) that he had seen Mr. Grenville lately, who asked him when he should go to America. That he had answered, "I have stayed here longer than I should otherwise have done, that I might see whether we were to have peace or war, but as I see that the expectation of peace is a joke, and that you only amuse us without any real intention of treating; I think to stay no longer, but set out in a few days." On which Mr. Grenville assured him, it was no joke, that they were very sincere in their proposal of treating, and that four or five days would convince the Marquis of it. The Marquis then spoke to me about a request of Major Ross's in behalf of himself, Lord Chewton, a lieutenant-colonel, and Lieutenant Haldane, who were aids-de-camp to Lord Cornwallis, that they too might be set at liberty with him. I told the Marquis that he was better acquainted with the custom in such cases than I, and being himself one of the Generals to whom their parole had been given, he had more right to discharge it than I had, and that if he judged it a thing proper to be done, I wished him to do it. He went unto the bureau, saying, he would write something, which he accordingly did. But it was not as I expected, a discharge that he was to sign, it was for me to sign. And the Major not liking that which I had drawn for Lord Cornwallis, because there was a clause in it, reserving to Congress the approbation or disallowance of my act, went away without taking it. Upon which I the next morning wrote the following to Mr. Oswald.

SIR, *Passy, June* 11, 1782.

I did intend to have waited on you this morning to enquire

after your health, and deliver the inclosed paper relating to the parole of Lord Cornwallis, but being obliged to go to Versailles, I must postpone my visit till to-morrow. I do not conceive that I have any authority in virtue of my office here to absolve that parole in any degree: I have therefore endeavoured to found it as well as I could on the express power given me by Congress to exchange General Burgoyne for Mr. Laurens. A reservation is made, of confirmation or disapprobation by Congress, not from any desire in me to restrain the entire liberty of that General; but because I think it decent and my duty to make such reservation, and that I might otherwise be blamed as assuming a power not given me, if I undertook to discharge absolutely a parole given to Congress, without any authority from them for so doing. With great esteem and respect, I have the honour to be, Sir, your most obedient servant, B. FRANKLIN.

I have received no answer from Mr. Laurens.

The following is the paper mentioned in the above letter.

"The Congress having, by a resolution of the 14th of June last, empowered me to offer an exchange of General Burgoyne for the honourable Mr. Laurens, then a prisoner in the Tower of London, and whose liberty they much desired to obtain; which exchange, though proposed by me according to the said resolution, had not been accepted or executed, when advice was received that General Burgoyne was exchanged in virtue of another agreement; and Mr. Laurens having thereupon proposed another Lieutenant-General, viz. Lord Cornwallis, as an exchange for himself, promising that if set at liberty he would do his utmost to obtain a confirmation of that proposal: and Mr. Laurens being soon after discharged, and having since urged me earnestly in several letters, to join with him in absolving the parole of that General, which appears to be a thing just and equitable in itself, and for the honour therefore of our country; I do hereby as far as in my power lies, in virtue of the above-mentioned resolution or otherwise, absolve and discharge the parole of Lord Cornwallis given by him in Virginia; setting him at entire liberty to act in his civil and military capacity until the pleasure of Congress shall be known, to whom is reserved the confirmation or disapprobation of this discharge, in case they have made, or shall intend to make a different disposition. Given at Passy, this 9th day of June, 1782.

(Signed) B. FRANKLIN.

Minister Plenipotentiary from the United States of America at the Court of France."

I did not well comprehend the Major's conduct in refusing this paper. He was come express from London to solicit a discharge of Lord C.'s parole. He had said that his Lordship was very anxious to obtain that discharge, being unhappy in his present situation. One of his objections to it was, that his Lordship with such a limited discharge of his parole could not enter into foreign service. He declared it was not his Lordship's intention to return to America. He would not accept the paper, unless the reservation was omitted. I did not chuse to make the alteration; and so he left it, not well pleased with me.

This day, Tuesday, June 11, I was at Versailles and had a good deal of conversation with M. de Rayneval, Secretary to the Council. I showed him the letters I had received by Mr. Oswald from Lord Shelburne, and related all the consequent conversation I had with Mr. Oswald. I related to him also the conversation I had had with Mr. Grenville. We concluded that the reason of his courier not being returned might be the formalities occasioning delay in passing the enabling bill. I went down with him to the cabinet of M. de Vergennes, where all was repeated and explained. That minister seemed now to be almost persuaded that the English Court was sincere in its declarations of being desirous of peace. We spoke of all its attempts to separate us, and of the prudence of our holding together, and treating in concert. I made one remark, that as they had shown so strong a desire of disuniting us, by large offers to each particular power, plainly in the view of dealing more advantageously with the rest; and had reluctantly agreed to make a general treaty, it was possible that after making a peace with all, they might pick out one of us to make war with separately. Against which project, I thought it would not be amiss if before the treaties of peace were signed, we who were at war against England, should enter into another treaty, engaging ourselves that in such case we should again make it a common cause, and renew the general war; which he seemed to approve of. He read Lord Shelburne's letter relating to Mr. Walpole, said that gentleman had attempted to open a negociation through the Marquis de Castries, who had told him he was come to the wrong house, and should go to M. de Vergennes; but he never had appeared. That he was an intriguer, knew many people about the Court, and was accustomed to manage his affairs by hidden round-about ways; "but," says he, "when people have any thing to propose that relates to my employment, I think they should come directly to me, my cabinet is the place where such affairs are to be treated." On the whole, he seemed rather pleased that Mr. Walpole had not come to him, appearing not to like him. I learnt that Mr. Jay had taken leave on the 7th past of the Spanish

minister in order to come hither, so that he may be daily expected. But I hear nothing of Mr. Laurens or Mr. Adams.

Wednesday June 12. I visited Mr. Oswald this morning. He said he had received the paper I sent him relating to the parole of Lord Cornwallis, and had by conversing with Major Ross convinced him of his error in refusing it. That he saw I had done every thing that could be fairly desired of me, and said every thing in the paper that could give weight to the temporary discharge, and tend to prevail with the Congress to confirm and compleat it. Major Ross coming in made an apology for not having accepted it at first, declared his perfect satisfaction with it, and said he was sure Lord Cornwallis would be very sensible of the favour. He then mentioned the custom among military people, that in discharging the parole of a General, that of his Aid's was discharged at the same time. I answered that I was a stranger to the customs of the army; that I had made the most of the authority I had for exchanging General Burgoyne by extending it as a foundation for the exchange of Lord Cornwallis; but that I had no shadow of authority for going farther: that the Marquis de la Fayette having been present when the parole was given, and one of the Generals who received it, was I thought more competent to the discharge of it than myself, and I could do nothing in it. He went then to the Marquis, who in the afternoon sent me the draft of a limited discharge which he should sign, but requested my approbation of it, of which I made no difficulty; though I observed he had put into it that it was by my advice. He appears very prudently cautious of doing any thing that may seem assuming a power that he is not vested with.

Friday the 14th Mr. Boeris called again, wishing to know if Mr. Grenville's courier was returned, and whether the treaty was likely to go on. I could give him no information. He told me that it was intended in Holland in answer to the last Russian memorial to say, that they could not now enter into a particular treaty with England, that they thought it more glorious for her Imperial Majesty to be the mediatrix in a general treaty, and wished her to name the place. I said to him, "as you tell me that their H. M. are not well satisfied with Russia, and had rather avoid her mediation, would it not be better to omit the proposition at least of her naming the place, especially as France, and England, and America have already agreed to treat at Paris?" He replied, "it might be better, but" says he "we have no politicians among us." I advised him then to write, and get that omitted, as I understood it would be a week, before the answer was concluded on. He did not seem to think his writing would be of much importance. I have observed

that his colleague M. Vanderpierre has a greater opinion by far of his own influence and consequence.

Saturday 15th June. Mr. Oswald came to breakfast with me. We afterwards took a walk in the garden, when he told me Mr. Grenville's courier returned last night: that he had received by him a letter from Mrs. Oswald, but not a line from the ministry, nor had he heard a word from them since his arrival; nor had he heard of any news brought by the courier. That he should have gone to see Mr. Grenville this morning, but had omitted it, that gentleman being subject to morning head aches, which prevented his rising so early. I said I supposed he would go to Versailles, and call on me in his return. We had but little farther discourse having no new subject.

Mr. Oswald left me about noon, and soon after Mr. Grenville came, and acquainted me with the return of his courier, and that he had brought the full powers. That he Mr. G. had been at Versailles, and left a copy with M. de Vergennes. That the instrument was in the same terms with the former, except that after the power to treat with the king of France or his ministers, there was an addition of words importing a power to treat with the ministers of any other prince or state whom it might concern. That M. de Vergennes had at first objected to these general words, as not being particular enough, but said he would lay it before the king, and communicate it to the ministers of the belligerent powers, and that Mr. Grenville should hear from him on Monday. Mr. Grenville added, that he had farther informed M. de Vergennes of his being now instructed to make a proposition, as a basis for the intended treaty, to wit, the peace of 1763. That the proposition intended to be made under his first powers, not being then received, was now changed, and instead of proposing to allow the independence of America on condition of England's being put into the situation she was in at the peace of 1763, he was now authorized to declare the independence of America previous to the treaty as a voluntary act, and to propose separately as a basis the treaty of 1763. This also M. de Vergennes undertook to lay before the king, and communicate to me. Mr. Grenville then said to me, he hoped all difficulties were now removed, and that we might proceed in the good work. I asked him, if the enabling bill was passed. He said, No. It had passed the commons and had been once read in the house of lords, but was not yet completed. I remarked, that the usual time approached for the prorogation of parliament, and possibly this business might be omitted. He said there was no danger of that, the parliament

would not rise this year till the middle of July. The India affairs had put back other business, which must be done, and would require a prolongation of the session till that time. I then observed to him, that though we Americans considered ourselves as a distinct independent power or state, yet as the British government had always hitherto affected to consider us only as rebellious subjects, and as the enabling act was not yet passed, I did not think it could be fairly supposed that his court intended by the general words *any other prince or state* to include a people whom they did not allow to be a state; and that therefore I doubted the sufficiency of his power as to treating with America, though it might be good as to Spain and Holland. He replied, that he himself had no doubt of the sufficiency of his power, and was willing to act upon it. I then desired to have a copy of the power, which he accordingly promised me. He would have entered into conversation on the topic of reconciliation, but I chose still to wave it, till I should find the negociation more certainly commenced; and I showed him the London paper containing the article above transcribed P. that he might see how our conversations were misrepresented, and how hazardous it must be for me to make any propositions of the kind at present. He seemed to treat the newspaper lightly as of no consequence; but I observed that before he had finished the reading of the article, he turned to the beginning of the paper to see the date, which made me suspect that he doubted whether it might not have taken its rise from some of his letters.

When he left me I went to dine with M. de Chaumont, who had invited me to meet there Mr. Walpole at his request. We shook hands, and he observed that it was near two years since we had seen each other. Then stepping aside, he thanked me for having communicated to him Lord Shelburne's letter to Mr. Oswald; thought it odd that Mr. Oswald himself had not spoke to him about it; said he had received a letter from Mr. Fox upon the affair of St. Eustatia, in which there were some general words expressing a desire of peace; that he had mentioned this to M. de Castries, who had referred him to M. de Vergennes, but he did not think it a sufficient authority to go to that minister. It was known that he had business with the minister of the marine on the other affair, and therefore his going to him was not taken notice of; but if he had gone to M. de Vergennes minister of foreign affairs, it would have occasioned speculation and much discourse; that he had therefore avoided it 'till he should be authorized, and had written accordingly to Mr. Fox, but that in the mean time Mr. Oswald had been chosen upon the supposition that he (Mr. Walpole) and I were at variance. He spoke of Mr.

Oswald as an odd kind of man, but that indeed his nation were generally odd people &c. We dined pleasantly together with the family, and parted agreeably without entering into any particulars of the business. Count d'Estaing was at this dinner, and I met him again in the evening at Madame Brillon's. There is at present among the people much censure of Count de Grasse's conduct, and a general wish that Count d'Estaing had the command in America. I avoid meddling, or even speaking on the subject, as improper for me though I much esteem that commander.

Sunday 16th I heard nothing from Versailles. I received a letter from Mr. Adams acquainting me he had drawn upon me for a quarter's salary, which he hoped would be the last, as he now found himself in a way of getting some money there, though not much; I have not a line from Mr. Laurens which I wonder at. I received also a letter from Mr. Carmichael dated June 5th at Madrid. He speaks of Mr. Jay being on his journey, and supposes he would be with me before that letter, so that I may expect him daily. We have taken lodgings for him at Paris.

Monday 17th. I received a letter from Mr. Hodgson acquainting me that the American prisoners at Portsmouth, to the number of 330, were all embarked on board the transports; that each had received twenty shillings worth of necessaries at the expence of government, and went on board in good humour. That contrary winds had prevented the transports arriving in time at Plymouth, but that the whole number now there of our people, amounting to 700 with those arrived from Ireland, would be soon on their way home.

In the evening the Marquis de la Fayette came to see me, and said he had seen M. de Vergennes who was satisfied with Mr. Grenville's powers. He asked me what I thought of them, and I told him, what I had said to Mr. Grenville of their imperfection with respect to us. He agreed in opinion with me. I let him know that I proposed writing to M. de Vergennes to-morrow. He said he had signed the paper relating to Major Ross's parole, and hoped Congress would not take it amiss; and added, that in conversation with the Major, he had asked him, why England was so backward to make propositions? We are afraid, says the Major, of offering you more than you expect or desire.

I find myself in some perplexity, with regard to these two negociators. Mr. Oswald appears to have been the choice of Lord Shelburne: Mr. Grenville that of Mr. Secretary Fox. Lord Shelburne is said to have lately acquired much of the King's confidence: Mr. Fox calls himself the minister of the people, and it is certain his popularity is lately much increased. Lord S. seems to wish to have

the management of the treaty; Mr. Fox seems to think it in his department. I hear that the understanding between those ministers is not quite perfect. Mr. Grenville is clever, and seems to feel reason as readily as Mr. Oswald, though not so ready to own it. Mr. Oswald appears quite plain and sincere. I sometimes a little doubt Mr. Grenville. Mr. Oswald, as an old man, seems to have now no desire but that of being useful in doing good. Mr. Grenville, a young man, naturally desirous of acquiring reputation, seems to aim at that of being an able negociator. Oswald does not solicit to have any share in the business, but submitting the matter to Lord S. and me expresses only his willingness to serve, if we think he may be useful, and is equally willing to be excused if we judge there is no occasion for him. Grenville seems to think the whole negociation committed to him, and to have no idea of Oswald's being concerned in it; and is therefore willing to extend the expressions in his commission, so as to make them comprehend America, and this beyond what I think they will bear. I imagine we might however go on very well with either of them, though I should prefer Oswald; but I apprehend difficulties if they are both employed, especially if there is any misunderstanding between their principals. I must however write to Lord S. proposing something in consequence of his offer of vesting Mr. Oswald with any commission that gentleman and I should think proper.

Tuesday 18th. I found myself much indisposed with a sudden and violent cold, attended with a feverishness and head-ache. I imagined it to be an effect of the influenza, a disorder now reigning in various parts of Europe. This prevented my going to Versailles.

Thursday 20th. Weather excessively hot, and my disorder continues, but is lessened, the head-ache having left me. I am however not yet able to go to Versailles.

Friday 21st. I received the following note from the Marquis de la Fayette.

My Dear Sir, *Versailles, Thursday Morning, June* 20, 1782.

Agreeable to your desire I have waited upon Count de Vergennes, and said to him what I had in command from your Excellency. He intends taking the King's orders this morning, and expects he will be able to propose Mr. Grenville a meeting for to-morrow, where he will have time to explain himself respecting France and her allies, that he may make an official communication both to the king and the allied ministers. What Count de Vergennes can make out of this conversation will be communicated by him to your Excellency in case

you are not able to come,—in the other case I shall wait upon you to-morrow evening with every information I can collect. I have the honour to be very respectfully, my dear Sir, your obedient servant, and affectionate friend, LA FAYETTE.

In the evening the Marquis called upon me, and acquainted me that Mr. Grenville had been with Count de Vergennes, but could not inform me what had passed.

Saturday 22d. Messrs. Oswald and Whiteford came and breakfasted with me. Mr. O. had received no letter or instructions. I told him I would write to Lord Shelburne respecting him, and call on him on Monday morning to breakfast, and show him what I proposed to write, that it might receive such alterations as he should judge proper.

Sunday 23. In the afternoon Mr. Jay arrived to my great satisfaction. I proposed going with him the next morning to Versailles, and presenting him to M. de Vergennes. He informed me, that the Spanish ministers had been much struck with the news from England respecting the resolutions of parliament to discontinue the war in America, &c., and that they had since been extremely civil to him, and he understood intended to send instructions to the ambassador at this court, to make the long talked of treaty with him here.

Monday 24th. Wrote a note of excuse to Mr. Oswald, promising to see him on Wednesday, and went with Mr. Jay to Versailles. M. de Vergennes acquainted us, that he had given to Mr. Grenville the answer to his propositions, who had immediately dispatched it to his court. He read it to us, and I shall endeavour to obtain a copy of it. M. de Vergennes informing us that a frigate was about to be dispatched for America, by which we might write, and that the courier who was to carry down the dispatches would set off on Wednesday morning, we concluded to omit going to court on Tuesday, in order to prepare our letters. M. de Vergennes appeared to have some doubts about the sincerity of the British court, and the *bonne foi* of Mr. Grenville; but said the return of Mr. G.'s courier might give light.

I received the following letter from Mr. Adams, dated *the Hague June* 13, 1782.

FROM HIS EXCELLENCY JOHN ADAMS, ESQ. TO DR. FRANKLIN.

SIR, *The Hague, June* 13, 1782.

I had yesterday at Amsterdam, the honour of receiving your Excellency's letter of June 2nd.

The discovery that Mr. Grenville's power was only to treat with France does not surprize me at all. The British ministry are too divided among themselves, and have too formidable an opposition against them, in the king and the old ministers, and are possessed of too little of the confidence of the nation, to have courage to make concessions of any sort, especially since the news of their successes in the East and West Indies. What their vanity will end in God only knows: for my own part, I cannot see a probability, that they will ever make peace, until their finances are ruined, and such distresses brought upon them, as will work up their parties into a civil war.

I wish their enemies could by any means be persuaded to carry on the war against them in places, where they might be sure of triumphs, instead of insisting upon pursuing it, where they are sure of defeat. But we must take patience, and wait for time to do, what wisdom might easily and soon do.

I have not as yet taken any engagements with the Dutch not to make peace without them; but I will take such engagements in a moment, if the Dutch will take them, and I believe they would very cheerfully. I shall not propose it however till I have the concurrence of the Duke de la Vauguyon, who will do nothing without the instructions of his court. I would not delay it a moment from any expectation that the English will acknowledge our independence and make peace with us, because I have no such expectations. The permanent friendship of the Dutch may be easily obtained by the United States. That of England never: it is gone with the days before the flood. If we ever enjoy the smallest degree of sincere friendship again from England, I am totally incapable of seeing the character of a nation or the connections of kings; which however may be the case for what I know. They have brought themselves into such a situation! Spain, Holland, America, the armed neutrality have all such pretensions and demands upon them, that where is the English minister, or member of parliament that dares to vote for the concession to them? The pretensions of France I believe would be so moderate, that possibly they might be acceded to. But it is much to be feared that Spain, who deserves the least will demand the most: in short, the work of peace appears so impracticable and chimerical, that I am happy in being restrained to this country, by my duty, and by this means excused from troubling my head much about it. I have a letter from America that informed me, that Mr. Jay had refused to act in the commission for peace; but if he is on the way to Paris, as you suppose, I presume my information must be a mistake, which I am very glad of. Mr. Laurens did me the honour of a very short visit, in his way to France, but I

was very sorry to learn from him, that in a letter to your Excellency from Ostend, he had declined serving in the Commission for peace. I had vast pleasure in his conversation, for I found him possessed of the most exact judgment concerning our enemies, and of the same noble sentiments in all things, which I saw in him in Congress.

What is the system of Russia? Does she suppose that England has too many enemies upon her, and that their demands and pretensions are too high? Does she seek to embroil affairs, and to light up a general war in Europe? Is Denmark in concert with her, or any other power? Her conduct is a phenomenon. Is there any secret negociation or intrigue on foot to form a party for England among the powers of Europe? and to make a balance against the power of the enemies of England?

The states of Holland and several other provinces have taken a resolution against the mediation for a separate peace, and this nation seems to be well fixed in its system, and in the common cause.

My best respects and affections to my old friend Mr. Jay, if you please. I have the honour to be, Sir, your most obedient and most humble servant, J. ADAMS.

Wrote to Mr. Secretary Livingston, and Mr. Robert Morris, of which the following are Extracts.

EXTRACT OF A LETTER TO THE HON. ROBERT MORRIS.

Passy, June 25, 1782.

For what relates to war and peace, I must refer you to Mr. Livingston, to whom I write fully. I will only say, that though the English a few months since seemed desirous of peace, I suspect they now intend to draw out the negociation into length, till they can see what this campaign will produce. I hope our people will not be deceived by fair words, but be on their guard, ready against every attempt that our insidious enemies may make upon us. I am, &c.

Wednesday, 26th. I sent away my letters, and went to see Mr. Oswald. I shewed him the draft of a letter to be addressed to him instead of Lord Shelburne respecting the commission or public character he might hereafter be vested with; this draft was founded on Lord S.'s memorandums, which Mr. Oswald had shown to me, and this letter was intended to be communicated by him to Lord Shelburne. Mr. Oswald liked the mode, but rather chose that no mention should

be made of his having shown me Lord S.'s memorandums, though he thought they were given him for that purpose. So I struck that out, and new modelled the letter, which I sent him next day, as follows.

SIR, *Passy, June 27, 1782.*

The opinion I have of your candour, probity, good understanding, and good-will to both countries, made me hope that you would have been vested with the character of plenipotentiary to treat with those from America. When Mr. Grenville produced his first commission, which was only to treat with France, I did imagine that the other to treat with us, was reserved for you, and kept back only till the enabling bill should be passed. Mr. Grenville has since received a second commission, which, as he informs me, has additional words, empowering him to treat with the ministers of any other prince or state, whom it may concern; and he seems to understand that these general words comprehend the United States of America. There may be no doubt that they comprehend Spain and Holland, but as there exist various public acts by which the government of Britain denies us to be States and none in which they acknowledge us to be such, it hardly seems clear that we could be intended, at the time that commission was given, the enabling act not being then passed. So that though I can have no objection to Mr. Grenville, nor right to make it if I had any, yet as your long residence in America has given you a knowledge of that country, its people, circumstances, commerce, &c. which, added to your experience in business, may be useful to both sides in facilitating and expediting the negociation, I cannot but hope that it is still intended to vest you with the character above-mentioned respecting the treaty with America, either separately or in conjunction with Mr. Grenville, as to the wisdom of your ministers may seem best. Be it how it may, I beg you would accept this line as a testimony of the sincere esteem and respect, with which I have the honour to be, Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

Friday, June 28. M. de Rayneval called upon me and acquainted me that the ministers had received intelligence from England, that besides the orders given to General Carleton, to propose terms of re-union to America, artful emissaries were sent over to go through the country, and stir up the people to call on the Congress to accept those terms, they being similar to those now settling with Ireland. That it would therefore be well for Mr. Jay and me to write, and caution the Congress against these practices. He said M. de Vergennes wished also to know what I had written respecting the negociation, as it would be well for us to

hold pretty near the same language. I told him I did not apprehend the least danger that such emissaries would meet with any success, or that the Congress would make any treaty with General Carleton. That I would however write as he desired; and Mr. Jay coming in promised the same. He said the courier would go to-morrow. I accordingly wrote to Mr. Secretary Livingston, and to my friend Dr. Cooper, of which the following are extracts.

TO THE HON. ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.

SIR, *Passy, June* 28, 1782.

In mine of the 25th instant I omitted mentioning, that at the repeated earnest instances of Mr. Laurens, who had given such expectations to the ministry in England, when his parole or securities were discharged, as that he could not think himself at liberty to act in public affairs till the parole of Lord Cornwallis was absolved by me in exchange, I sent to that General the paper, of which the enclosed is a copy; and I see by the English papers, that his Lordship immediately on the receipt of it, appeared at Court and has taken his seat in the House of Peers, which he did not before think warrantable. My authority for doing this appeared questionable to myself, but Mr. Laurens judged it deducible from that respecting General Burgoyne, and by his letters to me, seemed so unhappy till it was done, that I ventured it, with a clause however, (as you will see), reserving to Congress the approbation or disallowance of it.

The enabling act is now said to be passed, but no copy of it is yet received here, so that as the bill first printed has suffered alterations in passing through parliament, and we know not what they are, the treaty with us is not yet commenced. Mr. Grenville expects his courier in a few days, with the answer of his Court to a paper given him on the part of this. That answer will probably afford us a clearer understanding of the intentions of the British ministry, which for some weeks past have appeared somewhat equivocal and uncertain. It looks as if, since their late success in the West Indies, they a little repented of the advances they had made in their declarations respecting the acknowledgment of our independence; and we have pretty good information that some of the ministry still flatter the King with the hope of recovering his sovereignty over us on the same terms as are now making with Ireland. However willing we might have been at the commencement of this contest to have accepted such conditions, be assured that we can have no safety in them at present. The King hates us most cordially. If he is once admitted to any degree of power or government among us, however limited, it will soon be extended

by corruption, artifice, and force, till we are reduced to absolute subjection; and that the more easily, as by receiving him again for our King, we shall draw upon ourselves the contempt of all Europe, who now admire and respect us, and shall never again find a friend to assist us. There are it is said great divisions in the ministry on other points as well as this; and those who aim at engrossing the power flatter the King with this project of re-union; and it is said have much reliance on the operation of private agents sent into America to dispose minds there in favour of it, and to bring about a separate treaty there with General Carleton. I have not the least apprehension that Congress will give into this scheme, it being inconsistent with our treaties as well as with our interest; but I think it will be well to watch these emissaries, and secure or banish immediately such as shall be found tampering and stirring up the people to call for it. The firm united resolution of France, Spain, and Holland, joined with ours, not to treat of a particular but a general peace, notwithstanding the separate tempting offers to each, will in the end give us the command of that peace. Every one of the other powers see clearly their interest in this, and persist in that resolution: the Congress I am persuaded are as clear-sighted as any of them, and will not depart from the system which has been attended with so much success, and promises to make America soon both great and happy.

I have just received a letter from Mr. Laurens, dated at Lyons, on his journey into the South of France for his health. Mr. Jay will write also by this opportunity. With great esteem, I have the honour to be, &c. B. FRANKLIN.

EXTRACT OF A LETTER TO DR. COOPER, BOSTON.

Passy, June 28, 1782.

Our public affairs are in a good situation here. England having tried in vain to make a separate peace with each of the powers she is at war with, has at length agreed to treat for a general peace with them altogether; and at Paris. If we all continue firm in the resolution not to separate, we shall command the terms. I have no doubt of this steadiness here; and though we are told that endeavours are making on your side the water to induce America to a re-union on the terms now granting to Ireland, and that powers are sent to General Carleton for that purpose, I am persuaded the danger of this project will appear so evident, that if offered it will be immediately rejected. We have no safety but in our independence. With that we shall be respected, and soon become great, and happy. Without it we shall be despised, lose all our friends, and then either be

cruelly oppressed by the King who hates and is incapable of forgiving us, or having all that nation's enemies for ours, shall sink with it. I am ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately, B. FRANKLIN.

M. de Rayneval (who is Secretary to the Council of State), calling again in the evening, I gave him copies of the preceding letters to peruse, and show to M. de Vergennes; to convince them that we held no underhand dealings here. I own I had at the same time another view in it, which was that they should see I had been ordered to demand farther aids, and had forborne to make the demand with my reasons; hoping that if they possibly could help us to more money, they might be induced to do it.

I had never made any visit to Count d'Aranda, the Spanish Ambassador, for reasons before mentioned. M. de Rayneval told Mr. Jay and me this morning, that it would be well for us to wait upon him, and he had authority to assure us we should be well received. We accordingly concluded to wait on his Excellency next morning.

Saturday, June 29. We went together to the Spanish Ambassador's, who received us with the greatest civility and politeness. He spoke with Mr. Jay on the subject of the treaty they were to make together, and mentioned in general as a principle, that the two powers should consider each other's conveniency, and accommodate and compensate each other as well as they could. That an exact compensation might perhaps not be possible, but should be approached as nearly as the nature of things would admit. Thus, says he, if there is a certain thing which would be convenient to each of us, but more convenient to one than to the other, it should be given to the one to whom it would be most convenient; and compensation be made by giving another thing to the other for the same reason. I suppose he had in view something relating to boundaries or territories, because he added, "we will sit down together with maps in our hands, and by that means shall see our way more clearly." I learned from him that the expedition against Providence had failed, but no advice was yet received of its success. At our going out he took pains himself to open the folding doors for us, which is a high compliment here, and told us he would return our visit (rendre son devoir), and then fix a day with us for dining with him. I dined with Mr. Jay and a company of Americans at his lodgings.

Sunday, July 1. Mr. Grenville called on me.

[This Journal does not appear to have been further continued: but the deficiency will be partly made up by the following Correspondence.]

TO THE HON. HENRY LAURENS.

SIR, *Passy, July 2, 1782.*

I received the letter you did me the honour of writing to me from Lyons the 24th past.

I wonder a little at Mr. * * * not acquainting you whether your name was in the Commission or not. I begin to suspect from various circumstances that the British ministry, elated perhaps too much by the success of Admiral Rodney, are not in earnest to treat immediately, but rather wish delay. They seem to hope that farther successes may enable them to treat more advantageously; or, as some suppose, that certain propositions to be made to Congress by General Carleton, may render a treaty here with us unnecessary. A little bad news, which it is possible they may yet receive from the same quarter, will contribute to set them right; and then we may enter seriously upon the treaty; otherwise I conjecture it may not take place till after another campaign. Mr. Jay is arrived here. Mr. Grenville and Mr. Oswald continue here. Mr. Oswald has yet received no Commission; and that of Mr. Grenville does not very clearly comprehend us according to British ideas; therefore requires explication. When I know more you shall have farther information.

Not having an immediate answer to what I wrote you concerning the absolution of Lord Cornwallis's parole. and Major Ross coming over hither from him to press it; I gave him the discharge you desired. Enclosed I send you a copy. I hear it has proved satisfactory to him; I hope it will be so to you. Believe me to be, with great esteem, &c.

FROM GOVERNOR POWNALL TO DR. FRANKLIN.

DEAR SIR, *Richmond Hill, July 5, 1782.*

I have, by my friend Mr. Hobart, sent a printed copy of the three memorials which I published on the subject of America, one addressed to the sovereigns of Europe, and two others addressed to the sovereign of Great Britain.

I hope you received my letter of May 13, 1782, forwarded by Mr. Bridgen.

As it is possible you may see Mr. Hobart, he can inform you from me, as well as of his own knowledge, of the steps we took upon the ground of your communications to him and me. "That there were persons authorized to treat of peace,

and that such persons were willing to give to reasonable measures taken to that end, every assistance in their power." He can inform you also on the circumstances which attended those steps; and of the effect which *they missed in the direct line, as of the effect they actually have in an oblique one.* As from the beginning of this matter of trying to bring on negociation for peace, I considered him as joined with me in our endeavours; so I have given to him a memorandum which I made on the course of this business. He will communicate to you every thing which is not improper for a man of honour to communicate to the minister of a people at war with us: nor will he abstain from communicating any thing which that minister, wishing peace to our country, ought to be apprized of, respecting the effects of his friendly offers. He will do every thing which a man of honour ought to do, and he will do nothing that a man of honour ought not to do.

I have desired him to give a paper of queries, respecting *modes* and *terms* of settling in America, which people of this old world, and of the old country may in future be admitted to receive. I am, not only for my friends, but personally interested to gain information on that head: and as I wish that which will not deceive them or myself, I apply to you.

May God send peace on earth. I hope among the general blessings it will bring, it will restore me to the communication and enjoyment of my old and long valued friendship with you. May you live to see, and have health to enjoy, the blessings which I hope it may please God to make you the instrument of communicating to mankind. I am, dear Sir, your friend and very humble servant,

T. POWNALL.

P. M.

To THE HON. MR. HOBART.

When I published the memorials which I had prepared for the King, January 1, 1782, I prefixed a prefatory explanation of the publication, stating as far as was safe so to do, the state of the *propositions of treaty*, and the circumstances attending the reception and final refusal of them.

I could not think it proper *to name the person* with whom I had corresponded, who was authorised to treat of peace, and was willing to promote it, because I knew the insidious falsehood of *those who both hate and fear him*, would, when once his name was committed with the public, represent him in any light that might tend to diminish and destroy the trust and confidence which he so deservedly has from his employers. The memorials therefore speak of *persons* in the *plural*, and the preface in its communications to the public keeps close to that expressed.

I could not venture to tell the public, nor could I venture to write to this person, the fact that he *specifically and personally was excepted to*, in an *opprobrious manner*. Because the same persons who are his enemies, having proscribed me, would have been glad of making such my communications an occasion of charging me with *crimes*, which, notwithstanding they have been in constant watch, they have never yet been able to do. For although I know they have whispered such in the closet, they never have dared to assert any such matter as *fact* in public. What I did, I thought right in point of honour to all concerned or interested, and I went as far as I dared venture to go in the publications which I made.

As this exception to the integrity and good faith of my correspondent, was made upon the very first overture which I made by all the ministers, I made a point, in all the memorials which I drew up for presentation (had the offers been admissible), of founding my offers on the integrity and good faith of this person (p. 32), and in this communication to the public of marking him (preface, p. 10), as a man of honour and good faith.

I could not venture to communicate to my correspondent, much less to the public, those matters, which, though not officially communicated to me, these my enemies *would have represented* as a betraying to *the enemy* the secrets of government. But it is fit, if not absolutely necessary, to make this memorandum of these things, that *the truth*, when the proper time shall come, may be known to all whom it doth concern; and it is further fit that this memorandum should be communicated to you now, as the proposing of your services was included in the offers made as a condition *sine qua non*.

Between the 6th of December 1781 and the end of January 1782, during which time the ministry kept me in suspense as to what resolution they would take, as to what answer they would give; or whether they would give me any answer at all; or whether they would deign to admit me and my propositions to a hearing; they dishonourably towards me, and as I think towards my correspondent also, profited of the *fact communicated by me to them*, viz. "that there were persons authorised to treat of peace; and, that these persons were disposed to give such treaty every assistance in their power:"—and sent one person (I have been told it was Mr. Oswald), to Holland, a person, if not actually the same person, to Ghent, and a Mr. Forth to France, to try if they could not get upon *the same ground* by other ways, and *through other persons*. I have been told and believe it, that they understood that Mr. Adams was (disgusted with the Dutch government) ready to accede to ours. Also that Mr. ——— at Ghent *was already gained*. This person

they hurried off to America; and they gave instructions to General Carleton to open the ground of treaty in America. In short they tried any ground and every person except *him* who was excepted to. And when they found that they could not get in at any door in Europe, they affected to interpret this disappointment into a fact, "That the American ministers were either not empowered or not willing to treat; that the offer was now clearly *a trap laid by a faithless and decided enemy.*"

When I first made my offer I was asked whether I would go to Ghent or Holland, which I peremptorily refused. I was then asked why I would not, I said I knew nothing of the person in Holland, and as to the person at Ghent, I would have no communications there. The only person I would have communications with, was him that I knew had powers, whom I knew to be, notwithstanding all provocations to the contrary, invariably consistent with his duty to his own country, a well-wisher and friend to this, whom from experience I knew to be a man of *honour and good faith*, whom I could trust, and who would trust me. This person and this line was rejected; I will not aggravate the colour of facts by saying *how*.

I was informed that during this period they were talking with Mr. Laurens as a more practicable man, as one who had by acknowledging himself amenable to the laws and courts of this country, and by the act of giving bail had by implication acknowledged (at least de facto), the sovereignty of Great Britain, and that *the ministers of the States* were criminals against this country. This gentleman therefore, and his surety Mr. Oswald, were fixed upon *as the persons* through whom business might go. What was the nature of the matters of business on which they were communicated with, I do not know.

Notwithstanding the change of the ministry which took place at this period, there were some in the new composition of ministers, who partook of the spirit and influence of the old ones, and the same line of motion, and the same persons, were in like manner as before, adopted for treaty.

The memorial, January 1, 1782, (p. 22), declares specifically and definitively what was the proposition I made, viz. to open a "negociation *for the purpose only* of settling such a truce with the Americans, as a *preliminary measure*, in order the better to treat of peace in future, either separately, or in any general Congress of the powers of Europe." And this on a ground of *uti possidetis*, both as to *rights* as well as *territories* possessed, which I explained as an acknowledgment of the independence of America, with a sauf d'honneur to the British sovereign, and a removing of all obstacles from the way of such other sovereigns in Europe as had

not yet brought themselves to acknowledge the American sovereignty. (p. 22) I never pretended to talk of peace, much less of a *separate peace*, but definitively declared that whatever was undertaken " must not contravene, (Mem. Jan. 1782, p. 21), nor ever bring into question, treaties already subsisting."

On this ground it was, that upon my first overtures I proposed that while I was treating with the American ministers, Mr. Hobart might be authorised to treat with French ministers as the properest man then in England, as living with the men of business of that Court; as known to them; as knowing them; and between whom and him there was that degree and those habits of acquaintance and good opinion, which is the only soil out of which practical confidence in negociation can grow; as one with whom I could communicate with the most perfect confidence, as one in whose hands I would repose my life and honour. I said first that if these two lines of treaty were not instituted at the same time; and secondly, that if Mr. Hobart was not the person joined with me, I would not engage in what I had offered. This gentleman, a man of honour, brother to the Earl of Buckingham, of a noble distinct landed estate of his own; a man designed by his education at the Court of Vienna, under former ministers in a former reign, for the corps diplomatic, and actually having served in Russia; was also inadmissible. And they thus ended all matters in which I had made my offers.

Having thus found the ministers with whom I had communicated, impracticable towards peace in the only line in which I thought it might be obtained, and seeing an opportunity in which I could be *principally instrumental in turning them out*, I seized the occasion, and effectuated the purpose.

General Conway had communicated to me a measure which he was to take of moving an address of the House of Commons, to pray his Majesty to relinquish the farther prosecution for peace. I stated to him the following difficulty which might be thrown on the ground of his motion, so as to obstruct his proceeding in it. The ministers might in general terms, and equivocal assertions say, that they were trying the ground of treaty, and that propositions towards negociation were afloat, &c. &c., and then if on this ground they called upon him, not at *such a juncture* to bring forward measures which might obstruct their endeavours, and destroy all hopes and views of peace, he would be puzzled what to answer and how to proceed. But, that if he could have it in his power to say, That so far from opening the ground of negociation, or being disposed to take a way to such; which offers had opened to them; that they had offers made by persons communicating with other persons *actually authorised* and willing to *treat of peace*, and had rejected those

offers; I thought the ministers would not know how to oppose his motion. He said, that indeed would be strong ground, from whence if the ministry were attacked, he did not see how they could maintain *their ground.* I then proceeded in my communications to him, without naming my correspondent, nay absolutely refusing to name when earnestly pressed, and told him, that I was the person to whom communications had come, "that there were in Europe *persons* authorised to treat of peace, and who had declared that any reasonable measures to that end, should have every assistance in their power." That I had communicated this to the ministry, that after delaying all answer from December 6 to the end of January to offers, which I had made them on that ground, they had finally and absolutely rejected the persons and the offers. He said if this could be proved it must turn them out. I then authorised him to make those assertions[1] which he made in the House, which that we might not misunderstand one another, I desired might be written down: and farther authorised him, if the ministry by denying the assertions should render it necessary, to name me, as ready to come and declare the same at the bar of the House of Commons; and that in the mean while he need not make any secret of me on this matter. The ministers could not, and did not venture to deny it, and were forced to quit their ground and their places.[2] Upon the change of ministers, I by letter to General Conway made an offer of my services to open the same negociation which I had proposed to the late ministers, but from that hour to this day have never heard from him: and soon after found that Lord Shelburne had employed Mr. Oswald, who was Mr. Laurens's surety, and that his Lordship had seen Mr. Laurens.

Richmond, July 2, 1782.

Memorandum by David Hartley, Esq.

July 8, 1782.

To a person who no longer thinks of American dependence, what disadvantage can there be in making its independence a fixed article (whether the treaty succeeds or no) instead of making it a first article of the treaty, and so to depend on the success of that which may miscarry. To a person indeed who looks

[1] Which were not those which the news-papers published.

[2] The country gentlemen tired of the war, and grown impatient for peace, left the old ministry on this question, and declared themselves the supporters of those who promised to end the war, and give peace to the country.

on it as an evil, and as an evil which there are *yet some hopes* to avoid, it is a rational proceeding to provide for *all* possibilities of realizing those hopes; and the case of the treaty not succeeding is that reserved possibility. Were I treating with an enemy indeed for a barrier town (which I certainly wish to keep or to get something for), nothing I own would be so absurd as to give it up at starting, as a *fixed* article *before* the treaty, instead of making it the first article *of* a treaty, and dependent on the success of the rest. But I had rather have American independence (for one reason amongst others), because the bolder way of giving it up, will secure a greater certainty of peace, I would then be for giving it up in that bolder way, nay had I some reluctance to American independence, I should still think the smallest probability added of peace, would over-balance the whole value of a mere reserved possibility of dependence, which could only, after all, arise from the failure of the treaty.

NOTE FROM LE MARQUIS DE LA FAYETTE TO DR. FRANKLIN.

Paris, July 9, 1782.

I have the honour to inform you, my dear Sir, that Mr. Grenville's express is arrived this morning by way of Ostend. The gentleman is gone to Versailles. I fancy he will wait upon you, and will be much obliged to you, to let me know what your opinion is. I am going to Saint Germain, but if any intelligence comes to hand will communicate it as soon as possible. I rest respectfully and affectionately, yours, LA FAYETTE.

The answer.

DEAR SIR, *Passy, July 9, 1782.*

Mr. Grenville has been with me in his return from Versailles. He tells me that Lord Rockingham being dead, Lord Shelburne is appointed first Lord of the Treasury; and that Mr. Fox has resigned; so that both the Secretaryships are vacant. That his communication to M. de Vergennes, was only that no change was thereby made in the dispositions of that Court for peace, &c., and he expects another courier with fuller instructions in a few days. As soon as I hear more I shall acquaint you with it. I am ever with great respect and affection, your most obedient humble servant, B. FRANKLIN.

Marquis de la Fayette.

To David Hartley, Esq. M. P.

Dear Sir, *Passy, July* 10, 1782.

I received your favour of the 26th past by Mr. Young, and am indebted to you for some preceding. I do not know why the good work of peace, goes on so slowly on your side. Some have imagined that your ministers since Rodney's success are desirous of trying fortune a little farther before they conclude the war: others, that they have not a good understanding with each other. What I have just heard seems to countenance this opinion. It is said Mr. Fox has resigned. We are ready here on the part of America to enter into treaty with you, in concurrence with our allies; and are disposed to be very reasonable; but if your *plenipotentiary*, notwithstanding that character, is upon every proposition obliged to send a courier and wait an answer, we shall not soon see the happy conclusion. It has been suspected too, that you wait to hear the effect of some overtures sent by General Carleton for a separate peace in America. A vessel just arrived from Maryland, brings us the unanimous resolutions of their assembly for continuing the war at all hazards rather than violate their faith with France. This is a sample of the success to be expected from such a measure? if it has really been taken; which I hardly believe.

There is methinks a point that has been too little considered in treaties, the means of making them durable. An honest peasant from the mountains of Provence, brought me the other day a manuscript he had written on the subject, and which he could not procure permission to print. It appeared to me to have much good sense in it; and therefore I got some copies to be struck off for him to distribute where he may think fit. I send you one enclosed. This man aims at no profit from his pamphlet or his project, asks for nothing, expects nothing, and does not even desire to be known. He has acquired he tells me a fortune of near 150 crowns a year (about 18*l.* sterling) with which he is content. This you may imagine would not afford the expence of riding to Paris, so he came on foot; such was his zeal for peace and the hope of forwarding and securing it by communicating his ideas to great men here. His rustic and poor appearance has prevented his access to them; or obtaining their attention; but he does not seem yet to be discouraged. I honour much the character of this *veritable philosophe*.

I thank you much for your letters of May 1, 13, and 25 with your proposed preliminaries. It is a pleasure to me to find our sentiments so concurring on points of importance: it makes discussions as unnecessary as they might, between us, be

inconvenient. I am my dear Sir, with great esteem and affection, your's ever,

B. FRANKLIN.

EXTRACT OF A LETTER TO B. VAUGHAN, ESQ.

Passy, July 10, 1782.

"By the original law of nations, war and extirpation was the punishment of injury. Humanizing by degrees, it admitted slavery instead of death. A farther step was, the exchange of prisoners instead of slavery. Another, to respect more the property of private persons under conquest, and to be content with acquired dominion. Why should not this law of nations go on improving? Ages have intervened between its several steps; but as knowledge of late increases rapidly, why should not those steps be quickened? Why should it not be agreed to as the future law of nations that in any war hereafter the following descriptions of men should be undisturbed, have the protection of both sides, and be permitted to follow their employments in surety; viz.

1. Cultivators of the earth, because they labour for the subsistence of mankind.
2. Fishermen, for the same reason.
3. Merchants and traders, in unarmed ships, who accommodate different nations by communicating and exchanging the necessaries and conveniences of life.
4. Artists and mechanics, inhabiting and working in open towns.

It is hardly necessary to add that the hospitals of enemies should be unmolested; they ought to be assisted.

In short, I would have nobody fought with but those who are paid for fighting. If obliged to take corn from the farmer, friend or enemy, I would pay him for it; the same for the fish or goods of the others.

This once established, that encouragement to war which arises from a spirit of rapine, would be taken away, and peace therefore more likely to continue and be lasting.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO B. VAUGHAN, ESQ.

DEAR SIR, *Passy, July* 11, 1782.

In mine of yesterday which went by Mr. Young I made no mention of yours of May 11, it not being before me. I have just now found it.

You speak of a "proposed dependent state of America, which you thought Mr. Oswald would begin with." As yet I have heard nothing of it. I have all along

understood (perhaps I have understood more than was intended) that the point of dependence was given up, and that we were to be treated with as a free people. I am not sure that Mr. Oswald has explicitly said so, but I know that Mr. Grenville has, and that he was to make that declaration previous to the commencement of the treaty. It is now intimated to me from several quarters that Lord Shelburne's plan is to retain sovereignty for the king, giving us otherwise an independent parliament, and a government similar to that of late intended for Ireland. If this be really his project, our negociation for peace will not go very far; the thing is impracticable and impossible, being inconsistent with the faith we have pledged, to say nothing of the general disposition of our people. Upon the whole I should believe that though Lord S. might formerly have entertained such an idea, he had probably dropped it before he sent Mr. Oswald here: your words above cited do however throw a little doubt into my mind, and have with the intimations of others, made me less free in communication with his lordship, whom I much esteem and honour, than I should otherwise have been. I wish therefore you would afford me what you can of eclaircissement.

This letter going by a courier will probably get to hand long before the one (preceding in date) which went by Mr. Young, who travels on foot. I therefore inclose the copy of it which was taken in the press. You may return it to me when the other arrives.

By the return of the courier, you may much oblige me, by communicating, what is fairly communicable, of the history of Mr. Fox's and Lord J. Cavendish's resignation, with any other changes made or likely to be made.

With sincere esteem, I am ever, my dear friend your's most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

LETTERS TO RICHARD OSWALD, ESQ. AND TO LORD SHELBURNE.

SIR, *Passy, July* 12, 1782.

I inclose a letter for Lord Shelburne, to go by your courier, with some others of which I request his care. They may be put into the penny post. I have received a note informing me that "some opposition given by his lordship to Mr. Fox's decided *plan*, of *unequivocally acknowledging American independence*, was one cause of that gentleman's resignation;" this from what you have told me, appears improbable. It is farther said "that Mr. Grenville thinks Mr. Fox's resignation will be fatal to the present negociation." This perhaps is as groundless as the former. Mr. Grenville's next courier will probably clear up

matters. I did understand from him that such an acknowledgment was intended previous to the commencement of the treaty; and until it is made, and the treaty formally begun, propositions and discussions seem in consideration, to be untimely; nor can I enter into particulars without Mr. Jay, who is now ill with the influenza. My letter therefore to his lordship, is merely complimentary on his late appointment. I wish a continuance of your health, in that at present sickly city, being with sincere esteem Sir, your most obedient and most humble servant, B. FRANKLIN.

R. Oswald Esq.

I send you inclosed the late resolutions of the State of Maryland; by which the general disposition of people in America may be guessed, respecting any treaty to be proposed by General Carleton if intended, which I do not believe.

MY LORD, *Passy, July* 12, 1782.

Mr. Oswald informing me that he is about to dispatch a courier, I embrace the opportunity of congratulating your lordship on your appointment to the treasury. It is an extension of your power to do good, and in that view, if in no other, it must increase your happiness which I heartily wish; being with great and sincere respect, my Lord, your lordship's most obedient and most humble servant, B. FRANKLIN.

Right Honourable the Earl of Shelburne.

EXTRACT OF A LETTER TO LE MARQUIS DE LA FAYETTE.

Passy, July 24, 1782.

"In answer to your questions, Mr. Oswald is doing nothing, having neither powers nor instructions; and being tired of doing nothing, has dispatched a courier requesting leave to return. He has I believe received no letters since I saw you, from Lord Shelburne, Mr. Grenville's return hither is I think doubtful, as he was particularly connected in friendship with Mr. Fox; but if he stays I suppose some other will be sent, for I do not yet see sufficient reason to think they would abandon the negociation, though from some appearances I imagine they are more intent upon dividing us, than upon making a general peace. I have heard nothing farther from Mr. Laurens, nor received any paper from him respecting Lord Cornwallis. And since that General's letter written after the battle of Camden, and ordering not only the confiscation of rebels' estates, but the hanging of prisoners, has been made public, I should not wonder if the Congress were

to disallow our absolution of his parole, and recall him to America. With everlasting esteem and respect, I am, dear Sir, yours most affectionately, B. F.

FROM DAVID HARTLEY, ESQ. M. P. TO DR. FRANKLIN.

MY DEAR FRIEND, *London, July 26,* 1782.

You will have heard before you receive this, that Mr. Thomas Townshend is appointed secretary of state for that department to which the American correspondence belongs. He is and has been for many years one of my most intimate friends. A more honourable, and honest man, does not exist. I have been requested in connection with him to undertake one branch of his office relating to America as instrumental to some necessary arrangements in the course of a negociation for peace with America. The point which I have been requested to undertake is, the case, or rather the diversity of cases of the American refugees. I understand that in the progress of this business, I shall be referred to a correspondence with you, as matter may arise. My purpose therefore for the present is only to advertize you of this, in case you should have any preliminary matter to give or receive elucidation upon. I am very ready to undertake any matter which may be necessary or instrumental towards peace, especially in connection with my worthy friend Mr. Townshend.

You know all my principles upon American pacification, and *sweet reconciliation.* I shall always remain in the same. But the delegation of a single point to me, such as the case of the refugees, does not entitle me to advise upon the great outlines or principles of such pacific negociations. I shall retain my full reservation in such points as events may justify. My personal motive for saying this to you, is obvious. But in point of justice to those who have at present the direction of public measures in this country, I must request that this caution of mine may be accepted only as personal to myself, and not as inferential upon the conduct of others, where I am not a party. Having taken a zealous part in the principles and negociations of peace, I wish to stand clear from any collateral constructions which might affect myself, and at the same time not to impose any collateral or inferential constructions upon others.

God prosper the work of peace and *good will* (as the means of peace) among men. I am, ever your most affectionate friend, D. HARTLEY.

FROM LORD GRANTHAM TO DR. FRANKLIN.

SIR, *Whitehall, July 26,* 1782.

As the first object of my wishes is to contribute to the

establishment of an honourable and lasting peace, I address myself to you without ceremony, upon the conviction that you agree with me in this principle. If I was not convinced that it was also the real system of the ministers of this country, I should not now be co-operating with them. The step they had already taken in sending Mr. Grenville to Paris, is a proof of their intentions, and as that gentleman does not return to his station there, I trust that the immediate appointment of a person to succeed him, will testify my agreement to the principles upon which he was employed. I therefore beg leave to recommend Mr. Fitzherbert to your acquaintance who has the King's commands to repair to Paris.

As I have not the advantage of being known to you, I can claim no pretence for my application to you, but my public situation, and my desire to merit your confidence upon a subject of so much importance as a pacification between the parties now engaged in a calamitous war.

I have the honour to be, with great regard, Sir, your most obedient humble servant, GRANTHAM.

FROM LORD SHELBURNE, TO DR. FRANKLIN.

SIR, *Shelburne House, July* 27, 1782.

I am much obliged by the honour of your letter of the 12th. instant. You do me most acceptable justice in supposing my happiness intimately connected with that of mankind, and I can with truth assure you, it will give me great satisfaction in every situation to merit the continuance of your good opinion.

I have the honour to be, with very sincere regard, and esteem, dear Sir, your most obedient and most humble servant, SHELBURNE.

TO MR. OSWALD.

SIR, *Passy, July* 28, 1782. 8 *o'clock.*

I have but this minute had an opportunity by the departure of my company of perusing the letters you put into my hands this afternoon; and I return them directly without waiting till our interview to-morrow morning, because I would not give a moment's delay to the delivery of those directed to other persons. The situation of Captain Asgill and his family afflicts me: but I do not see what can be done by any one here to relieve them. It cannot be supposed that General Washington has the least desire of taking the life of that gentleman. His aim is to obtain the punishment, committed on a prisoner in cold blood by

Captain Lippincott. If the English refuse to deliver up or punish this murderer, it is saying that they chuse to preserve him rather than Captain Asgill. It seems to me therefore that the application should be made to the English ministers, for positive orders directing General Carleton to deliver up Lippincott, which orders being obtained should be dispatched immediately by a swift sailing vessel. I do not think any other means can produce the effect desired. The cruel murders of this kind committed by the English on our people since the commencement of the war, are innumerable. The Congress and their generals to satisfy the people have often threatened retaliation; but have always hitherto forborne to execute it, and they have often been told insultingly by their enemies that this forbearance did not proceed from humanity but fear. General Greene, though he solemnly and publicly promised it in a proclamation, never made any retaliation for the murder of Col. Haynes, and many others in Carolina; and the people, who now think that if he had fulfilled his promise, this crime would not have been committed, clamour so loudly, that I doubt General Washington cannot well refuse what appears to them so just and necessary for their common security. I am persuaded nothing I could say to him on the occasion would have the least effect in changing his determination. Excuse me then if I presume to advise the dispatching a courier immediately to London, proposing to the consideration of ministers the sending such orders to General Carleton directly. They would have an excellent effect in other views. The post goes to-morrow morning at ten o'clock; but as nine days have been spent in bringing the letters here by that conveyance, an express is preferable. With sincere esteem I have the honour to be, &c. B. FRANKLIN.

To M. LE COMTE DE VERGENNES.

SIR, *Passy, August* 8, 1782.

Yesterday Mr. Oswald communicated to Mr. Jay and me, a paper he had just received from his court, being a copy of the King's order to the attorney or solicitor general to prepare a commission to pass the great seal, appointing him to treat with us, &c., and he showed us a letter from Mr. Secretary Townshend, which expresses his concern that the commission itself could not be sent by this courier, the officers who were to expedite it being in the country, which would occasion a delay of eight or ten days; but that its being then sent might be depended on, and it was hoped the treaty might in the mean time be proceeded on. Mr. Oswald left with me a copy of the paper which I inclose for your excellency's consideration, and am, with great respect, Sir, your excellency's, &c, B. F.

ANSWER.

A M. FRANKLIN,

Je reçois, Monsieur, la lettre de ce jour dont vous m'avez honoré et la copie du pouvoir que M. Oswald vous a communiqué. La forme dans la quelle il est conçu n'étant pas celle qui est usitée, je ne puis pas arrêter mon opinion a une première vue, je vais l'examiner avec la plus grande attention, et si vous voulez bien vous rendre ici Samedi matin, je pourrai en conférer avec vous, et avec M. Jay s'il lui étoit commode de vous accompagner.

J'ai l'honneur d'être, trés-parfaitement, Monsieur, votre très humble, &c.

Versailles le 8 Août, 1782. DE VERGENNES.

EXTRACT OF A LETTER TO THE HON. ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.

Passy, August 12, 1782.

The second changes in the ministry of England have occasioned or have afforded pretences for various delays in the negociation for peace. Mr. Grenville had two successive imperfect commissions. He was at length recalled, and Mr. Fitzherbert is now arrived to replace him, with a commission in due form to treat with France, Spain and Holland. Mr. Oswald who is here, is informed that a commission impowering him to treat with the commissioners of Congress will pass the seals, and be sent him in a few days. Till it arrives this court will not proceed in its own negociation. I send the enabling Act, as it is called. Mr. Jay will acquaint you with what passes between him and the Spanish Ambassador respecting the proposed treaty with Spain. I will only mention that my conjecture of that court's design to coop us up within the Alleghany mountains is now manifested: I hope Congress will insist on the Missisipi as the boundary, and the free navigation of the river, from which they would entirely exclude us. B. F.

FROM DAVID HARTLEY, ESQ. M. P. TO DR. FRANKLIN.

MY DEAR FRIEND, *London, August* 16, 1782.

Yours I received by Major Young together with the work of your *veritable philosophe*, which is full of humanity. I was not before that, at a loss where I should have looked for my *veritable philosophe* in the present actual scene of public politics. Your honest, anxious and unremitted endeavours towards the re-establishment of peace, must endear you to your own country, and to all mankind. Whatever may have been transacting in America, (if it can be possible that the suspicions which you mention should become true) viz. to tamper with America

for a breach of faith, of which some suspicions seem to the thrown out by the provinces of Maryland and Philadelphia, I can give the strongest testimonies of the constant honour and good faith of your conduct and correspondencies; and my letters to you will bear me equal testimony, that I have never thrown out any dishonourable suggestions to you. When the proposed Congress of your *veritable philosophe* shall meet, neither of us need fear its censures, upon the strictest examination of our correspondence. We will claim the Poet's character of the sincere statesman,

" Who knew no thought but what the world might hear."

In times of suspicion it must be some satisfaction to both of us to know, that no line or word has ever passed between us, but what the governments of Great Britain, France and America might freely peruse as the words of good faith, peace and *sweet reconciliation*.

The resolutions of Maryland and Philadelphia together with the slow proceeding of our *plenipotentiaries*, and even the doubt suggested whether they may not be in waiting for events in America, give me much concern. Not being informed to a certainty of the state of the negociation, I have declined any concern with ministry upon the subject of the refugees, &c. My assistance cannot be indispensable upon that topic, but I deem it indispensable to myself, not to be committed in unknown ground, which from the points above mentioned must appear dubious to me. These are the reasons which I gave to the minister for declining. I must at the same time give him the justice of the most absolute and unlimited professions of sincerity for peace. Whatever divisions there may have been, as you say, suspected in the cabinet, there are some of his colleagues still remaining, in whom I have the greatest confidence for sincerity and good intentions. The public prints of this country have stated what are called *shades* of difference as to the mode. Those opinions which are imputed to Mr. Fox are certainly most suitable to my opinions. I am free to confess to you that my wishes would have been to have taken the most decisive ground relating to independence, &c. immediately from the 27th of March last, viz, the accession of the change of ministry. But I agree with you in sentiment; viz. to concur with all the good that offers, when we cannot obtain all the good that we might wish. The situation of my sentiments at present is, an unbiassed neutrality of expectation, as events may justify.

I shall be obliged to you for the earliest communications of any public events in America which may come to Europe, with any public resolutions of Congress or provinces, &c. and all memorials or negociations which may pass between the

parties in America. I am very anxious to have the earliest informations to form my opinions upon, and to be prepared accordingly. My utmost endeavours will always be exerted to the blessed work of peace. I am ever, your affectionate

D. HARTLEY.

To His Excellency J. Jay, Esq.

DEAR SIR, *Passy, Sept.* 4, 1782.

Mr. Oswald's courier being returned, with directions to him, to make the independence of America the first article in the treaty, I would wait on you if I could, to discourse on the subject: but as I cannot, I wish to see you here this evening, if not inconvenient to you. With great esteem, I have the honour to be, dear Sir, your most obedient and most humble servant, B. FRANKLIN.

Letter and official communication from RICHARD OSWALD, Esq. to DR. FRANKLIN.

SIR,

In consequence of the notice I have just now had from Mr. Jay of your desire of an extract from my last letter from the secretary of state, regarding the proposed treaty on the subject of American affairs; and my authority in relation thereto, I take the liberty to send the same inclosed; which, together with the powers contained in the commission which I had the honour of laying before you, and Mr. Jay, I am hopeful will satisfy you of the willingness and sincere desire of his majesty to give you entire content on that important subject.

This extract I would have sent before now, if I had thought you wished to have it before I had the honour of waiting on you myself; which was only delayed until I should be informed by Mr. Jay, that you was well enough to see me upon business. I heartily wish you a recovery of your health, and am, with sincere esteem and regard, Sir, your most obedient humble servant, RICHARD OSWALD.

Paris, September 5, 1782.

Extract of a letter to RICHARD OSWALD, Esq. from the Right Honourable THOMAS TOWNSHEND, one of his Majesty's principal Secretaries of State, dated Whitehall, Sept. 1, 1782.

SIR

"I have received and laid before the King, your letters of the 17th, 18th, and 21st ult; and I am commanded to signify to you his Majesty's

approbation of your conduct, in communicating to the American Commissioners the fourth article of your instructions; which could not but convince them, that the negociation for peace, and the cession of independence to the Thirteen United Colonies, were intended to be carried on and concluded with the Commissioners in Europe.

Those gentlemen having expressed their satisfaction concerning that article, it is hoped they will not entertain a doubt of his Majesty's determination to exercise, in the fullest extent, the powers with which the act of parliament hath invested him, by granting to America, full, complete, and unconditional independence, in the most explicit manner, as an article of treaty.

Paris, Sept. 5, 1782. RICHARD OSWALD."

FROM DAVID HARTLEY, ESQ. M. P. TO DR. FRANKLIN.

MY DEAR FRIEND, *Hotel de Yorck, Sept.* 7, 1782.

I beg of you not to forget your letter to Mr. Fox. The purpose of my journey to England will be, to do the best in my power for things and persons, and particularly for my friends. If you have any other private letters, send them to me; I will deliver them. I hope likewise to be personally charged with the answers. I am better this morning, and shall certainly set out very early to-morrow morning. Pray give my best compliments to Mr. and Mrs. Jay, and Mr. Temple Franklin. I wish you all health till I have the pleasure of seeing you again. Your ever most affectionate friend, D. HARTLEY.

TO RICHARD OSWALD, ESQ.

SIR, *Passy, Sept.* 8, 1782.

I have received the honour of yours, dated the 5th instant, inclosing an extract of a letter to your Excellency from the Right Hon. Thomas Townshend, one of his Majesty's principal Secretaries of State, wherein your conduct in communicating to us the fourth article of your instructions appears to have been approved by his Majesty. I suppose therefore that there is no impropriety in my requesting a copy of that instruction; and if you see none, I wish to receive it from you, hoping it may be of use in removing some of the difficulties that obstruct our proceeding. With great and sincere esteem, I am, Sir, your Excellency's most obedient and most humble servant, B. FRANKLIN.

Copy of the fourth article of his Majesty's instructions to Richard Oswald, for his government in treating with the Commissioners of the Thirteen United Colonies of America for a truce or peace, the said instructions being dated the 31st day of July, 1782; viz.

"4th Article. In case you find the American Commissioners are not at liberty to treat on any terms short of independence, you are to declare to them, that you have authority to make that concession. Our ardent wish for peace disposing us to purchase it at the price of acceding to the complete independence of the Thirteen Colonies, namely, New Hampshire, Massachusetts Bay, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, the three lower counties on Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia in North America."

Passy, 9th Sept. 1782. RICHARD OSWALD.

TO THE RIGHT HON. THE EARL OF GRANTHAM.

MY LORD, *Passy, Sept.* 11, 1782.

A long and severe indisposition has delayed my acknowledging the receipt of the letter your Lordship did me the honour of writing to me by Mr. Fitzherbert.

You do me justice in believing that I agree with you in earnestly wishing the establishment of an honourable and lasting peace; and I am happy to be assured by your Lordship that it is the system of the ministers with whom you are co-operating. I know it to be the sincere desire of the United States, and with such dispositions on both sides, there is reason to hope that the good work in its progress will meet with little difficulty. A small one has occurred in the commencement, with which Mr. Oswald will acquaint you. I flatter myself that means will be found on your part for removing it; and my best endeavours in removing subsequent ones (if any should arise) may be relied on.

I had the honour of being known to your Lordship's father. On several occasions he manifested a regard for me, and a confidence in me. I shall be happy if my conduct in the present important business may procure me the same rank in the esteem of his worthy successor. I am, with sincere respect, my Lord, your Lordship's most obedient and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

To DAVID HARTLEY, ESQ.

MY DEAR FRIEND, *Passy, Sept.* 17, 1782.

Since those acknowledged in my last, I have received your several favours of August 16, 20, and 26. I have been a long time afflicted with the gravel and gout, which have much indisposed me for writing. I am even now in pain, but will not longer delay some answer.

I did not perfectly comprehend the nature of your appointment respecting the refugees, and I supposed you would in a subsequent letter explain it. But as I now find you have declined the service, such explanation is become unnecessary.

I did receive the paper you enquire about, intitled Preliminaries, and dated May, 1782, but it was from you, and I know nothing of their having been communicated to this Court. The third proposition, "that in case the negociation between Great Britain, and the allies of America should not succeed, but war continue between them, America should act and be treated as a neutral nation," appeared at first sight inadmissible, being contrary to our treaty. The truce too seems not to have been desired by any of the parties. With unalterable esteem and affection, I am, my dear friend, ever yours, &c. B. FRANKLIN.

To BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, ESQ.

SIR, *Paris, Sept.* 24, 1782.

Having received by a Courier just now arrived, a letter from Mr. Secretary Townshend, in answer to mine which went by the messenger dispatched from hence on the 12th, I take this opportunity of Mr. Whiteford to send you a copy of it. I hope he will bring good accounts of your health, which I sincerely wish, and am, your Excellency's most obedient humble servant,

RICHARD OSWALD.

To RICHARD OSWALD, ESQ. (Private).

SIR, *Whitehall, Sept.* 20, 1782.

I received on Saturday last your packets of the 10th and 11th of this month.

A meeting of the King's confidential servants was held as soon as possible to consider the contents of them, and it was at once agreed to make the alteration in the Commission proposed by Dr. Franklin and Mr. Jay. I trust that the readiness with which this proposal has been accepted, will be considered as an ample testi-

mony of the openness and sincerity with which the government of this country is disposed to treat with the Americans.

The Commission is passing with as much dispatch as the forms of office will allow, but I thought it material that no delay should happen in giving you notice of the determination of his Majesty's Council upon this subject. You will receive the Commission very soon after this reaches you. I am, with great regard, Sir, your most obedient humble servant, T. TOWNSHEND.

EXTRACT OF A LETTER TO THE HON. ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.

Passy, Sept. 26, 1782.

"The negociations for peace have hitherto amounted to little more than mutual professions of sincere desires, &c.; being obstructed by the want of due form in the English Commissions appointing their Plenipotentiaries. The objections made to those for treating with France, Spain, and Holland, were first removed; and by the enclosed [1] it seems that our objections to that for treating

[1] The Commission here following.

Commission under the Great Seal of Great Britain, empowering Richard Oswald, Esq. to treat with the Commissioners of the Thirteen United States of America.

GEORGE the Third, by the Grace of God, of Great Britain, France, and Ireland, King, Defender of the Faith, and so forth, To our trusty and well beloved Richard Oswald, of our City of London, Esq. Greeting, Whereas by virtue of an Act passed in the last session of parliament, intituled an Act to enable his Majesty to conclude a peace or truce with certain Colonies in North America therein mentioned, it is recited, that it is essential to the interest, welfare, and prosperity of Great Britain and the Colonies or plantations of New Hampshire, Massachusetts Bay, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, the three lower counties on Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia in North America, that peace, intercourse, trade, and commerce, should be restored between them; therefore, and for a full manifestation of our earnest wish and desire, and of that of our parliament, to put an end to the calamities of war, it is enacted, that it should and might be lawful for us, to treat, consult of, agree and conclude with any Commissioner or Commissioners, named or to be named by the said Colonies or Plantations, or any of them respectively, or with any body or bodies corporate or politic, or any assembly or assemblies, or description of men, or any person or persons whatsoever, a peace or a truce with the said Colonies or Plantations, or any of them, or any part or parts thereof, any law, act or acts of parliament, matter or thing to the contrary in any wise notwithstanding; Now know ye that we, reposing especial trust in your wisdom, loyalty, diligence, and circumspection, in the management of the affairs to be hereby committed to your charge, have nominated and appointed, constituted and assigned, and by these presents do nominate and appoint, constitute, and assign you the said Richard Oswald to be our

with us will now be removed also; so that we expect to begin in a few days our negociations. But there are so many interests to be considered and settled in a peace between five different nations, that it will be well not to flatter ourselves with a very speedy conclusion."

Commissioner in that behalf, to use and exercise all and every the powers and authorities hereby entrusted and committed to you the said Richard Oswald, and to do, perform, and execute all other matters and things hereby enjoined and committed to your care, during our will and no longer, according to the tenour of these our letters patent; And it is our royal will and pleasure, and we do hereby authorise, empower, and require, you the said Richard Oswald, to treat, consult of, and conclude, with any Commissioners or persons vested with equal powers, by and on the part of the Thirteen United States of America, viz. New Hampshire, Massachusetts Bay, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, the three lower counties on Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia in North America, a peace or a truce with the said Thirteen United States, any law, act or acts of parliament, matter or thing to the contrary in any wise notwithstanding. And it is our further will and pleasure, that every regulation, provision matter, or thing, which shall have been agreed upon between you the said Richard Oswald and such Commissioners or persons as aforesaid, with whom you shall have judged meet and sufficient to enter into such agreement, shall be fully and distinctly set forth in writing, and authenticated by your hand and seal on one side, and by the hands and seals of such Commissioners or persons on the other, and such instrument so authenticated, shall be by you transmitted to us, through one of our principal Secretaries of State. And it is our farther will and pleasure, that you the said Richard Oswald, shall promise and engage for us, and in our royal name and word, that every regulation, provision, matter, or thing, which may be agreed to, and concluded by you our said Commissioner, shall be ratified and confirmed by us, in the fullest manner and extent; and that we will not suffer them to be violated or counteracted, either in whole or in part, by any person whatsoever. And we do hereby require and command all our officers, civil and military, and all others our loving subjects whatsoever, to be aiding and assisting unto you the said Richard Oswald, in the execution of this our commission, and of the powers and authorities herein contained. Provided always, and we do hereby declare and ordain, that the several offices, powers and authorities hereby granted, shall cease, determine, and become utterly null and void, on the first day of July, which shall be in the year of our Lord One Thousand, Seven Hundred and Eighty-three, although we shall not otherwise in the mean time have revoked and determined the same. And whereas in and by your Commission and letters patent, under our Great Seal of Great Britain, bearing date the seventh day of August last, we nominated and appointed, constituted and assigned you the said Richard Oswald to be our Commissioner, to treat, consult of, agree, and conclude, with any Commissioner or Commissioners named or to be named by certain Colonies or Plantations therein specified, a peace or truce with the said Colonies or Plantations; Now know ye that we have revoked and determined, and by these presents do revoke and determine our said Commission and letters patent, and all and every power, article, and thing, therein contained. In witness whereof, we have caused these our letters to be made patent.

DAVID HARTLEY, ESQ. M. P. TO DR. FRANKLIN.

MY DEAR FRIEND, *Bath, October* 4, 1782.

I only write one line to you to let you know that I am not forgetful of you, or of our common concerns. I have not heard any thing from the ministry yet: I believe it is a kind of vacation with them before the meeting of parliament. I have told you of a proposition which I have had some thoughts to make as a kind of co-partnership in commerce. I send you a purposed temporary convention, which I have drawn up. You are to consider it only as one I recommend. The words under-lined are grafted upon the proposition of my memorial, dated May 19, 1783. You will see the principle which I have in my thoughts to extend for the purpose of restoring our ancient co-partnership generally. I cannot tell you what event things may take, but my thoughts are always employed in endeavouring to arrange that system upon which the *China Vase* lately shattered may be cemented together, upon principles of compact and connection, instead of dependence. I have met with a sentiment in this country which gives some alarm, viz. lest the unity of government in America should be uncertain, and the States reject the authority of Congress. Some passages in General Washington's letter have given weight to these doubts. I don't hear of any tendency to this opinion; *that the American States will break to pieces, and then we may still conquer them.* I believe all that folly is extinguished. But many serious and well disposed persons are alarmed lest *this should be the ill-fated moment for relaxing the powers of the union, and annihilating the cement of confederation* (vide Washington's letter), and that Great Britain should thereby lose her best and wisest hope of being re-connected with the American States *unitedly.* I should for one, think it the greatest misfortune. Pray give me some opinion upon this. You see there is likewise another turn which may be given to this sentiment by intemperate and disappointed people, who may indulge a passionate revenge for their own disappointments, by endeavouring to excite general distrust, discord, and dis-union. I wish to be prepared

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Witness our self at Westminster, the twenty-first day of September, and the twenty-second year of our reign.

By the King himself.

YORKE.

Paris, Oct. 1, 1782. I certify, that the adjoining is a true copy of the Commission, of which it purports to be a copy, and which has been shewn to Dr. Franklin and Mr. Jay.

RICHARD OSWALD,
The Commissioner therein named.

and guarded at all points. I beg my best compliments to your colleagues; be so good as to show this letter to them. I beg particularly my condolence (and I hope congratulation) to Mr. Adams; I hear that he has been very dangerously ill, but that he is again recovered. I hope the latter part is true, and that we shall all survive to set our hands to some future compacts of common interest, and common affection, between our two countries. Your ever affectionate D. HARTLEY.

To the Hon. Robert R. Livingston.

SIR, *Passy, Oct.* 14, 1782.

I have but just received information of this opportunity, and have only time allowed to write a few lines.

In my last of the 26th past, I mentioned that the negociations for peace had been obstructed by the want of due form in the English Commissions, appointing their plenipotentiaries. In that for treating with us the mentioning our States by their public name had been avoided, which we objecting to, another is come, of which I send a copy inclosed. We have now made several preliminary propositions, which the English minister, Mr. Oswald, has approved, and sent to his Court. He thinks they will be approved there, but I have some doubts. In a few days however the answer expected will determine. By the first of these articles the King of Great Britain renounces for himself and successors all claim and pretension to dominion or territory within the Thirteen United States; and the boundaries are described as in our instructions; except that the line between Nova Scotia and New England is to be settled by Commissioners after the peace. By another article the fishery in the American Seas is to be freely exercised by the Americans, wherever they might formerly exercise it while united with Great Britain. By another, the citizens and subjects of each nation are to enjoy the same protection and privileges in each other's ports and countries respecting commerce, duties, &c., that are enjoyed by native subjects. The articles are drawn up very fully by Mr. Jay; who I suppose sends you a copy; if not, it will go by the next opportunity. If these articles are agreed to, I apprehend little difficulty in the rest. Something has been mentioned about the refugees and English debts, but not insisted on, as we declared at once, that whatever confiscations had been made in America, being in virtue of the laws of particular States, the Congress had no authority to repeal those laws, and therefore could give us none to stipulate for such repeal.

The ministry here have been induced to send over M. de Raynevall, Secretary of the Council, to converse with Lord Shelburne, and endeavour to form by that means a more perfect judgment of what was to be expected from the negociation. He was five or six days in England, saw all the ministers, and returned quite satisfied that they are sincerely desirous of peace; so that the negociations now go on with some prospect of success. But the Court and people of England are very changeable. A little turn of fortune in their favour sometimes turns their heads; and I shall not think a speedy peace to be depended on till I see the treaties signed. With great esteem, I have the honour to be, Sir, &c. B. FRANKLIN.

To His Excellency JOHN ADAMS, Esq. Minister Plenipotentiary, &c.

SIR, *Passy, Oct. 15, 1782.*

A long and painful illness has prevented my corresponding with your Excellency regularly.

Mr. Jay has, I believe, acquainted you with the obstructions our peace negotiations have met with, and that they are at length removed. By the next courier expected from London, we may be able perhaps to form some judgment of the probability of success, so far as relates to our part of the peace. How likely the other powers are to settle their pretensions I cannot yet learn. In the mean time America is gradually growing more easy, by the enemy's evacuation of their posts; as you will see by some intelligence I inclose. With great respect, I have the honour to be, &c. B. FRANKLIN.

FROM THE HON. T. TOWNSHEND TO DR. FRANKLIN.

SIR, *Whitehall, Oct. 23, 1782.*

As Mr. Strachey is going from hence to Paris with some particulars for Mr. Oswald, which were not easily to be explained in writing, I take the liberty of introducing him to your acquaintance, though I am not sure, that he is not already a little known to you. The confidential situation in which he stands with me makes me particularly desirous of presenting him to you.

I believe, Sir, I am enough known to you for you to believe me, when I say, that there has not been from the beginning a single person more averse to the unhappy war, or who wishes more earnestly, than I do, for a return of peace and mutual amity between Great Britain and America. I am, with great regard, Sir, your most obedient, humble servant, T. TOWNSHEND.

To the Right Hon. Thomas Townshend,
One of his Majesty's principal Secretaries of State.

Sir, *Passy, Nov. 4, 1782.*

I received the letter you did me the honour of writing to me by Mr. Strachey; and was much pleased with the opportunity it gave me of renewing and increasing my acquaintance with a gentleman of so amiable and deserving a character.

I am sensible you have ever been averse to the measures that brought on this unhappy war; I have therefore no doubt of the sincerity of your wishes for a return of peace. Mine are equally earnest. Nothing therefore except the beginning of the war, has given me more concern than to learn at the conclusion of our conferences, that it is not likely to be soon ended. Be assured no endeavours on my part would be wanting to remove any difficulties that may have arisen, or even if a peace were made, to procure afterwards any changes in the treaty that might tend to render it more perfect, and the peace more durable. But we who are here at so great a distance from our constituents, have not the possibility of obtaining in a few days fresh instructions, as is the case with your negociators, and are therefore obliged to insist on what is conformable to those we have, and at the same time appears to us just and reasonable. With great esteem and respect, I have the honour to be, Sir, &c. B. Franklin.

To the Ministers Plenipotentiary from the United States.

Gentlemen, *Paris, Nov. 5, 1782.*

Knowing the expectation of the King's ministers, that full indemnity shall be provided for the whole body of refugees, either by a restitution of their property, or by some stipulated compensation for their losses, and being confident, as I have repeatedly assured you, that your refusal upon this point will be the great obstacle to a conclusion and ratification of that peace which is meant as a solid, perfect, permanent reconciliation and re-union between Great Britain and America, I am unwilling to leave Paris without once more submitting the matter to your consideration. It affects equally in my opinion the honour and humanity of your country and of ours. How far you will be justified in risking every favourite object of America, by contending against those principles, is for you to determine. Independence and more than a reasonable possession of territory seem to be within your reach. Will you suffer them to be outweighed by the

gratification of resentment against individuals. I venture to assert that such a conduct hath no parallel in the history of civilized nations.

I am under the necessity of setting out by two o'clock to-day; if the time is too short for your re-consideration, and final determination of this important point, I shall hope that you will enable Mr. Oswald to dispatch a messenger after me, who may be with me before morning at Chantilly, where I propose sleeping to-night, or who may overtake me before I arrive in London, with a satisfactory answer to this letter. I have the honour to be, Gentlemen, Yours, &c. W. STRACHEY.

To H. STRACHEY, Esq.

SIR, *Paris, Nov. 6, 1782.*

We have been honoured with your favour of the 5th instant, and as our answer to a letter we received from Mr. Oswald on the same subject, contains our unanimous sentiments respecting it, we take the liberty of referring you to the inclosed copy of that answer. We have the honour to be, Sir, your most obedient, &c.

COPY OF THE LETTER TO MR. OSWALD.

SIR, *Nov. 6, 1782.*

In answer to the letter you did us the honour to write on the 4th instant, we beg leave to repeat what we often said in conversation, viz. that the restoration of such of the estates of refugees, as have been confiscated, is impracticable, because they were confiscated by laws of particular states, and in many instances have passed by legal titles through several hands. Besides, Sir, as this is a matter evidently appertaining to the internal polity of the separate states, the Congress by the nature of our constitution have no authority to interfere with it.

As to your demand of compensation to those persons, we forbear enumerating our reasons for thinking it ill founded: in the moment of conciliatory overtures it would not be proper to call certain scenes into view, over which a variety of considerations should induce both parties, at present to draw a veil. Permit us therefore only to repeat, that we cannot stipulate for such compensation, unless on your part it be agreed to make retribution to our citizens for the heavy losses they have sustained by the *unnecessary* destruction of their private property.

We have already agreed to an amnesty more extensive than justice required, and

full as extensive as humanity could demand. We can therefore only repeat, that it cannot be extended further.

We should be sorry if the absolute impossibility of our complying farther with your propositions on this head, should induce Great Britain to continue the war, for the sake of those who caused and prolonged it. But if that should be the case, we hope that the utmost latitude will not be again given to its rigours.

Whatever may be the issue of this negociation, be assured, Sir, that we shall always acknowledge the liberal, manly, and candid manner in which you have conducted it, and that we shall remain with the warmest sentiments of esteem and regard, your most obedient and very humble servants.

Article proposed by the American Plenipotentiaries.

It is agreed that his Britannic Majesty will earnestly recommend it to his parliament to provide for and make compensation to the merchants and shopkeepers of Boston, whose goods and merchandize were seized and taken out of their stores, warehouses and shops, by order of General Gage and others of his commanders or officers there, and also to the inhabitants of Philadelphia, for the goods taken away by his army there, and to make compensation also for the tobacco, rice, indigo, negroes, &c. seized and carried off by his armies under Generals Arnold, Cornwallis, and others, from the State of Virginia, North and South Carolina, and Georgia. And also for all vessels and cargoes belonging to the inhabitants of the said United States, which were stopped, seized, or taken, either in the ports or on the seas, by his governors or by his ships of war, before the declaration of war against the said States.

And it is further agreed, that his Britannic Majesty will also earnestly recommend it to his parliament to make compensation for all towns, villages, and farms, burnt and destroyed by his troops, or adherents in the said United States.

FACTS.

There existed a free commerce upon mutual faith, between Great Britain and America. The merchants of the former credited the merchants and planters of the latter with great quantities of goods on the common expectation that the merchants having sold the goods would make the accustomed remittances; that the planters would do the same by the labour of their negroes, and the produce of that labour, tobacco, rice, indigo, &c.

England, before the goods were sold in America, sends an armed force, seizes those goods in the stores, some even in the ships that brought them, and carries them off. Seizes also and carries off the tobacco, rice, and indigo, provided by the planters to make returns, and even the negroes from whose labour they might hope to raise other produce for that purpose.

Britain now demands that the debts shall nevertheless be paid.

Will she, can she justly refuse making compensation for such seizures?

If a draper who had sold a piece of linen to a neighbour on credit, should follow him, take the linen from him by force, and then send a bailiff to arrest him for the debt, would any court of law or equity award the payment of the debts, without ordering a restitution of the cloth?

Will not the debtors in America cry out, that if this compensation be not made, they were betrayed by the pretended credit, and are now doubly ruined, first by the enemy, and then by the negociators at Paris, the goods and negroes sold them being taken from them with all they had besides; and they are now to be obliged to pay for what they have been robbed of.

To Richard Oswald, Esq.

Sir, *November* 26, 1782.

You may well remember that in the beginning of our conferences, before the other commissioners arrived, on mentioning to me a retribution for the loyalists whose estates had been forfeited, I acquainted you that nothing of that kind could be stipulated by us, the confiscations being made by virtue of laws of particular States, which the Congress had no power to contravene or dispense with, and therefore could give us no such authority in our commission. And I gave it as my opinion, honestly and cordially, that if a reconciliation was intended, no mention should be made in our negociations of those people; for they having done infinite mischief to our properties by wantonly burning and destroying farm-houses, villages, and towns, if compensation for their losses were insisted on, we should certainly exhibit against it an account of all the ravages they had committed, which would necessarily recall to view scenes of barbarity that must inflame instead of conciliating, and tend to perpetuate an enmity that we all profess a desire of extinguishing. Understanding however from you, that this was a point your ministry had at heart, I wrote concerning it to Congress, and I have lately received the following:

" By the United States in Congress assembled.

" *September* 10, 1782.

" Resolved, that the Secretary for Foreign Affairs, be and is hereby directed to obtain as speedily as possible authentic returns of the stores and other property which have been carried off or destroyed in the course of the war by the enemy, and to transmit the same to the ministers plenipotentiary for negociating a peace.

" That in the mean time the Secretary for Foreign Affairs inform the said ministers, that many thousands of slaves and other property to a very great amount have been carried off or destroyed by the enemy; and that in the opinion of Congress, the great loss of property which the citizens of the United States have sustained by the enemy, will be considered by several states as an inseparable bar to their making restitution or indemnification to the former owners of property, which has been or may be forfeited to or confiscated by any of the States.

" In consequence of these resolutions and the circular letters to the Secretary, the Assembly of Pennsylvania then sitting passed the following act, viz.

" The States of Pennsylvania in general Assembly.

" *Wednesday, September* 18, 1782.

" The Bill intitled 'an Act for procuring an estimate of the damages sustained by the inhabitants of Pennsylvania, from the troops and adherents to the King of Great Britain during the present war,' was read a second time.

" Ordered to be transcribed and printed for public consideration.

" Extract from the Minutes,

" PETER Z. LLOYD,

" Clerk of the General Assembly."

" Bill intitled 'an Act for procuring an estimate of the damages sustained by the inhabitants of Pennsylvania, from the troops and adherents of the King of Great Britain during the present war.'

" Whereas great damages of the most wanton nature have been committed by the armies of the King of Great Britain or their adherents, within the territory of the United States of North America, unwarranted by the practice of civilized nations, and only to be accounted for from the vindictive spirit of the said King and his officers. And whereas an accurate account and estimate of such damages, more especially the waste and destruction of property, may be very useful to the people of the United States of America in forming a future treaty of peace, and in the mean time may serve to exhibit in a true light to the nations of Europe the conduct of the said King, his ministers, officers, and adherents, to the end, therefore, that proper measures be taken to ascertain the damages aforesaid, which have been done to the citizens and inhabitants of Pennsylvania, in the course of the present war, within this State:

" Be it enacted by the representatives of the freemen of the commonwealth of Pennsylvania, in general Assembly met, and by the authority of the same, that in every county of this State, which has been invaded by the armies, soldiers, and adherents of the King of Great Britain, the Commissioners of every such county, shall immediately meet together, each within their county, and issue directions to the assessors of the respective townships, districts, and places within such county, to call upon the inhabitants of every township and place, to furnish accounts and estimates of the damages, waste, spoil, and destruction, which have been done and committed as aforesaid, upon the property, real or personal

within the same township or place, since the first day of which was in the year of our Lord 177 and the same accounts and estimates to transmit to the said Commissioners without delay. And if any person or persons shall refuse or neglect to make out such accounts and estimates, the said assessors of the township or place shall, from their own knowledge, and by any other reasonable and lawful methods, take and render such an account and estimate of all damages done or committed as aforesaid.

"Provided always, that all such accounts and estimates, to be made out and transmitted as aforesaid, shall contain a narrative of the time and circumstances, and if in the power of the person aggrieved, the names of the general or other officer, or adherent of the enemy, by whom the damage in any case was done, or under whose orders, the army, detachment, party, or persons committing the same acted at that time, and also the name and addition of the person or persons whose property was so damaged or destroyed: and that all such accounts and estimates be made in current money, upon oath or affirmation of the sufferer, or of others having knowledge concerning the same; and that in every case it be set forth, whether the party injured had received any satisfaction for his loss, and by whom the same was given.

"And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, that the said Commissioners having obtained the said accounts and estimates from the assessors of the several townships and places, shall proceed to inspect and register the same in a book to be provided for that purpose, distinguishing the districts and townships, and entering those of each place together; and if any account or estimate be imperfect or not sufficiently verified and established, the said Commissioners shall have power, and they or any two of them are hereby authorised to summon and compel any person whose evidence they shall think necessary, to appear before them at a day and place to be appointed, to be examined upon oath or affirmation, concerning any damage or injury as aforesaid; and the said Commissioners shall upon the call and demand of the President or Vice-President of the Supreme-executive Council, deliver or send to the Secretary of the said Council, all or any of the original accounts and estimates aforesaid, and shall also deliver or send to the said Secretary, copies of the book aforesaid, or any part or parts thereof, upon reasonable notice.

"And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, that all losses of negroes or mulatto slaves and servants who have been deluded, and carried away by the enemies of the United States, and which have not been recovered or recompensed, shall be comprehended within the accounts and estimates aforesaid, and that the commissioners and assessors of any county, which hath not been invaded as aforesaid, shall nevertheless enquire after and procure accounts and estimates of any damages suffered by the loss of such servants, and slaves, as is herein before directed as to other property.

"And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, that the charges and expences of executing this act, as to the pay of the said commissioners and assessors, shall be as in other cases, with the witnesses, rewarded for their loss of time and trouble, as witnesses summoned to appear in the Courts of Quarter Sessions of the peace, and the said charges and expences shall be defrayed by the commonwealth, but paid in the first instance out of the monies in the hands of the treasurer of the county for county rates, and levies, upon orders drawn by the Commissioners of the proper county."

We have not yet had time to hear what has been done by the other Assemblies; but I have no doubt that similar acts will be made by all of them: and that the

mass of evidence produced by the execution of those acts, not only of the enormities committed by those people under the direction of British Generals, but of those committed by the British troops themselves, will form a record that must render the British name odious in America to the latest generations. In that authentic record will be found the burnings of the fine town of Charlestown, near Boston, of Falmouth just before winter, when the sick, the aged, the women, and children, were driven to seek shelter where they could hardly find it: of Norfolk in the midst of winter; of New London; of Fairfield, of Esopus, &c. &c. besides near an hundred and fifty miles of unsettled country laid waste, every house and barn burnt, and many hundreds of farmers with their wives and children butchered and scalped.

The present British ministers, when they reflect a little, will certainly be too equitable to suppose, that their nation has a right to make an *unjust* war (which they have always allowed this against us to be) and to do all sorts of unnecessary mischief, unjustifiable by the practice of any civilized people, which those they make war with are to suffer, without claiming any satisfaction, but that if Britons or other adherents are in return deprived of any property, it is to be restored to them, or they are to be indemnified! The British troops can never excuse their barbarities. They were unprovoked. The loyalists may say in excuse of theirs, that they were exasperated by the loss of their estates, and it was revenge. They have then had their revenge. Is it right they should have both?

Some of these people may have merit with regard to Britain; those who espoused her cause from affection, these it may become you to reward. But there are many of them who are waverers, and were only determined to engage in it by some occasional circumstances or appearances; these have not much of either merit or demerit, and there are others who have abundance of demerit respecting your country, having by their falsehoods and misrepresentations brought on and encouraged the continuance of the war. These instead of being recompensed should be punished.

It is usual among Christian people at war to profess always a desire of peace. But if the ministers of one of the parties chose to insist particularly on a certain article which they know the others are not and cannot be empowered to agree to, what credit can they expect should be given to such professions?

Your ministers require that we should receive again into our bosoms those who have been our bitterest enemies; and restore their properties who have destroyed ours; and this while the wounds they have just given us are still bleeding. It is many years since your nation expelled the Stuarts and their adherents, and confis-

cated their estates. Much of your resentment against them may by this time be abated. Yet if we should insist on and propose it as an article of our treaty with you, that that family should be recalled and the forfeited estates of its friends restored, would you think us serious in our professions of earnestly desiring peace?

I must repeat my opinion that it is best for you to drop all mention of the refugees. We have proposed indeed nothing but what we think best, both for you as well as ourselves. But if you will have them mentioned, let it be in an article which may provide that they shall exhibit accounts of their losses, to commissioners hereafter to be appointed, who shall examine the same, together with the accounts now preparing in America of the damages done by them; and state the account. And that if a balance appears in their favour it shall be paid by us to you, and by you divided among them as you shall think proper; and if the balance is found due to us, it shall be paid by you.

Give me leave however to advise you to prevent the necessity of so dreadful a discussion, by dropping the article, that we may write to America, and stop the enquiry. I have the honour to be, &c. B. FRANKLIN.

B. VAUGHAN, ESQ. TO DR. FRANKLIN.

MY DEAREST SIR, *Paris, Nov.* 27, 1782.

I am so agitated with the present crisis, that I cannot help writing you, to beseech you again and again to meditate upon some mild expedient about the refugees, or to give a favourable ear, and helping hand to such as may turn up.

Both sides agree that the matter of expence is nothing; and the matter of honour in my opinion is least to *that* side, which has most sense and most justice on its side. It seems to me that the matter of present *peace*, and *future happiness*, are the only points of true concern to either.

If I can judge of favourable moments, the present is of all others most favourable to our views of *reconciliation*. We have liberal American Commissioners at Paris, a liberal English Commissioner, and a liberal first minister for England. All these circumstances may vanish to-morrow, if this treaty blows over.

If you wanted to break off your treaty, I am perfectly sensible that you could not do it on grounds in which America would more join with you, than this of the refugees. On the other hand, if *England* wanted to break, she could not wish for better ground on *her* side. You do not break; and therefore I conclude you *both*

sincere. But in this way, I see the treaty is likely of *itself* to break. I pray then, my dearest, dearest Sir, that you would a little take this matter to heart.

If the refugees are not silenced, you must be sensible what constant prompters to evil measures you leave us, what perpetual sources of bad information. If the minister is able, on the other hand, to hold up his head on this *one* point, you must see how much easier it will be for you both to carry on the great work of reunion, as far as relates to prince and people. We are not well *informed* about the deeds of the refugees in England; and we can only *now* be well informed by publications that would do irreparable mischief.

Besides, you are the most magnanimous nation; and can excuse things to your people, which *we* can less excuse to *ours*. Not to mention, that when Congress sent you her last resolutions, she was not aware that you would be so near a settlement, as you are at present. To judge which is the hardest task, yours, or England's, put yourself in Lord Shelburne's place. The only marks of confidence shown him at Paris, are such as he *dares not name;* and the only marks promised him, are *future* national ones. England has given much ground of confidence to America. In my opinion England will do HER business in the way of RECONCILIATION, very much in proportion, as you do your business generously at the present peace. England is to be won, as well as America is to be won; and I beg you would think with yourself and your colleagues about the means. Excuse this freedom, my dearest Sir; it is the result of a very warm heart, that thinks a little property *nothing*, to much happiness. I do not however ask you to do a dishonourable thing, but simply to save England; and to give our English ministry the means of saying on the 5th December we have done *more* than the last ministry have done. I hope you will not think this zeal persecution; for I shall not mention this subject to you again, of my own accord.

I know you have justice on your side; I know you may talk of precedents; but there is such a thing as forgiveness, as generosity, and as a manly policy, that can share a small *loss* rather than miss a greater *good*. Yours, my dearest Sir, most devotedly, most gratefully, most affectionately, BENJAMIN VAUGHAN.

To M. LE COMTE DE VERGENNES.

SIR, *Passy, Nov. 29, 1782.*

I have the honour to acquaint your Excellency, that the Commissioners of the United States have agreed with Mr. Oswald on the preliminary articles of the peace between those States and Great Britain. To-morrow I

hope we shall be able to communicate to your Excellency a copy of them. With great respect, I have the honour to be, Sir, your Excellency's most obedient and most humble servant, B. FRANKLIN.

Articles agreed upon by and between Richard Oswald, Esquire, the Commissioner of his Britannic Majesty, for treating of peace with the Commissioners of the United States of America, in behalf of his said Majesty on the one part, and John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, John Jay, and Henry Laurens, four of the Commissioners of the said States, for treating of peace with the Commissioner of his said Majesty on their behalf on the other part, to be inserted in and constitute the treaty of peace proposed to be concluded between the Crown of Great Britain and the said United States, but which treaty is not to be concluded until terms of a peace shall be agreed upon between Great Britain and France, and his Britannic Majesty shall be ready to conclude such treaty accordingly.

Whereas reciprocal advantages and mutual convenience are found by experience to form the only permanent foundation of peace and friendship between States, it is agreed to form the articles of the proposed treaty, on such principles of liberal equity and reciprocity, as that partial advantages (those seeds of discord) being excluded, such a beneficial and satisfactory intercourse between the two countries may be established as to promise and secure to both perpetual peace and harmony.

Article 1. His Britannic Majesty acknowledges the said United States, viz. New Hampshire, Massachusetts Bay, Rhode Island, and Providence Plantations, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia, to be free, sovereign, and independent States; that he treats with them as such, and for himself, his heirs, and successors, relinquishes all claims to the government, proprietary, and territorial rights of the same, and every part thereof; and that all disputes which might arise in future on the subject of the boundaries of the said United States may be prevented, it is hereby agreed and declared, that the following are, and shall be their boundaries, viz.

Article 2. From the north-west angle of Nova Scotia, viz. That angle which is formed by a line drawn due north from the source of St. Croix River, to the Highlands, along the said Highlands which divide those Rivers that empty themselves into the River St. Laurence, from those which fall into the Atlantic Ocean, to the north westernmost head of Connecticut River; thence down along the middle of that River to the forty-fifth degree of North latitude, until it strikes the River Iroquois or Cataraguy, thence along the middle of said River into Lake Ontario, through the middle of said Lake, until it strikes the communication by water between that Lake and Lake Erie, thence along the middle of said communication into Lake Erie, through the middle of said Lake until it arrives at the water communication between that Lake and Lake Huron, thence along the middle of said water communication into the Lake Huron, thence through the middle to the water communication between that Lake and Lake Superior, thence through Lake Superior, Northward of the Isles Royal and Phelipeaux, to the Long Lake, thence through the middle of said Long Lake, and the water communication between it and the Lake of the Woods, to the said Lake of the Woods, thence through the said Lake to the most North-western point thereof, and from thence on a due West course to the River Mississippi, thence by a line to be drawn along the middle of the said River Mississippi until it shall intersect the northernmost part of the thirty-first degree of North latitude. South, by a line to be drawn due East from the determination of the line last mentioned in the latitude of thirty-one degrees North of the Equator, to the middle of

the river Apalachicola or Catahouche, thence along the middle thereof to its junction with the Flint River, thence straight to the head of St. Mary's River, and thence down along the middle of St. Mary's River to the Atlantic Ocean; East by a line to be drawn along the middle of the River St. Croix, from its mouth in the Bay of Fundy to its source, and from its source directly North to the aforesaid Highlands, which divide the Rivers that fall into the Atlantic Ocean from those that fall into the River St. Lawrence, comprehending all islands within twenty leagues of any part of the shores of the United States, and lying between lines to be drawn due East from the points where the aforesaid boundaries between Nova Scotia on the one part, and East Florida on the other, shall respectively touch the Bay of Fundy and the Atlantic Ocean, excepting such as now are or heretofore have been within the limits of the said province of Nova Scotia.

Article 3. It is agreed that the people of the United States shall continue to enjoy unmolested the right to take fish of any kind on the grand bank, and on all the other banks of Newfoundland, also in the Gulph of St. Lawrence, and at all other places in the sea where the inhabitants of both countries used at any time heretofore to fish. And also that the inhabitants of the United States shall have liberty to take fish of any kind on such part of the coast of Newfoundland as British fishermen shall use (but not to dry or cure the same on that island) and also on the coasts, bays and creeks of all other of his Britannic Majesty's dominions in America, and that the American fishermen shall have liberty to dry and cure fish in any of the unsettled bays, harbours, and creeks of Nova Scotia, Magdalen Islands, and Labrador, so long as the same shall remain unsettled, but so soon as the same or either of them shall be settled, it shall not be lawful for the said fishermen to dry or cure fish at such settlement, without a previous agreement for that purpose with the inhabitants, proprietors, or possessors of the ground.

Article 4. It is agreed that creditors on either side shall meet with no lawful impediment to the recovery of the full value in sterling money of all bona fide debts heretofore contracted.

Article 5. It is agreed that the Congress shall earnestly recommend it to the legislatures of the respective States, to provide for the restitution of all estates, rights, and properties, which have been confiscated belonging to real British subjects; and also of the estates, rights, and properties of persons resident in districts in possession of his Majesty's arms, and who have not borne arms against the said United States: and that persons of any other description shall have free liberty to go to any part or parts of the Thirteen United States, and therein to remain twelve months unmolested in their endeavours to obtain the restitution of such of their estates, rights, and properties as may have been confiscated, and that Congress shall also earnestly recommend to the several States a re-consideration and revision of all acts or laws regarding the premises, so as to render the said laws or acts perfectly consistent not only with justice and equity, but with that spirit of conciliation which on the return of the blessings of peace should universally prevail. And that Congress shall also earnestly recommend to the several States, that the estates, rights, and properties, of such last mentioned persons, shall be restored to them, they refunding to any persons who may be now in possession the *bona fide* price (where any has been given) which such persons may have paid on purchasing any of the said lands, rights, or properties, since the confiscation.

And it is agreed that all persons who have any interest in confiscated lands, either by debts, marriage settlements, or otherwise, shall meet with no lawful impediment in the prosecution of their just rights.

Article 6. That there shall be no future confiscations made nor any prosecutions commenced against

ady person or persons for, or by reason of the part which he or they may have taken in the present war, and that no person shall on that account suffer any future loss or damage either in his person, liberty, or property, and that those that may be in confinement on such charges at the time of the ratification of the treaty in America, shall be immediately set at liberty, and the prosecution so commenced be discontinued.

Article 7. There shall be a firm and perpetual peace between his Britannic Majesty and the said States, and between the subjects of the one and the citizens of the other; wherefore all hostilities both by sea and land shall then immediately cease; all prisoners on both sides shall be set at liberty, and his Britannic Majesty shall with all convenient speed, and without causing any destruction or carrying away any negroes or other property of the American inhabitants, all his armies, garrisons, and fleets, from the said United States, and from every port, place, and harbour within the same; leaving in all fortifications the American artillery that may be therein. And shall also order and cause all archives, records, deeds, and papers, belonging to any of the said States, or their citizens, which in the course of the war may have fallen into the hands of his officers, to be forthwith restored and delivered to the proper States and persons to whom they belong.

Article 8. The navigation of the river Mississippi from its source to the Ocean shall for ever remain free and open to the subjects of Great Britain and the citizens of the United States.

Article 9. In case it should so happen that any place or territory belonging to Great Britain or to the United States should be conquered by the arms of either from the other, before the arrival of these articles in America, it is agreed that the same shall be restored without difficulty and without requiring any compensation.

Done at Paris, November 30, 1782.

RICHARD OSWALD.	(L. S.)
JOHN ADAMS.	(L. S.)
B. FRANKLIN.	(L. S.)
JOSEPH JAY.	(L. S.)
HENRY LAURENS.	(L. S.)

Witness.—Caleb Whitefoord, Secretary to the British Commission.
William Temple Franklin, Secretary to the American Commission.

SEPARATE ARTICLE.

It is hereby understood and agreed, that in case Great Britain at the conclusion of the present war shall recover or be put in possession of West Florida, the line of North Boundary between the said province and the United States, shall be a line drawn from the mouth of the river Yassous, where it unites with the Mississippi, due East to the river Apalachicola.

Done at Paris, the thirtieth day of November, one thousand seven hundred and eighty-two.

RICHARD OSWALD.	(L. S.)
JOHN ADAMS.	(L. S.)
B. FRANKLIN.	(L. S.)
JOHN JAY.	(L. S.)
HENRY LAURENS.	(L. S.)

Copy of Pass given to the ship Washington to carry over the Preliminary Articles.

(L. S.) GEORGE R.

George the Third, by the Grace of God, King of Great Britain, France and Ireland, Defender of the Faith, &c. To all Admirals, Vice Admirals, Captains, Commanders of our ships of war or privateers, Governors of our Forts and Castles, Customhouse Comptrollers, Searchers, &c. to all and singular our officers and military and loving subjects whom it may concern, greeting, Our will and pleasure is, and we do hereby strictly charge and require you, as we do likewise pray and desire the officers and ministers of all princes and states in amity with us, to permit and suffer the vessel called the Washington commanded by Mr. —— Barney belonging to the United States of North America to sail from either of the ports of France to any port or place in North America, without any lett, hindrance, or molestation whatsoever, but on the contrary affording the said vessel all such aid and assistance as may be necessary. Given at our Court at St. James's the tenth day of December, 1782, in the twenty third year of our reign—By his Majesty's command, (signed) THOMAS TOWNSHEND.

To M. LE COMTE DE VERGENNES.

SIR, *Passy, Dec. 15, 1782.*

I have the honour to acquaint your Excellency, that our courier is to set out to-morrow at ten o'clock, with the dispatches we send to Congress, by the Washington, Captain Barney, for which ship we have got a passport from the King of England. If you would make any use of this conveyance, the courier shall wait upon you to-morrow at Versailles, and receive your orders.

I hoped I might have been able to send part of the aids we have asked, by this safe vessel. I beg that your Excellency would at least inform me, what expectations I may give in my letters. I fear the Congress will be reduced to despair, when they find that nothing is yet obtained. With the greatest and most sincere respect, I am, Sir, your Excellency's most obedient and most humble servant, B. F.

THE ANSWER.

Je puis être surpris, Monsieur, après l'explication que j'ai eu avec vous, et la promesse que vous m'aviez faite que vous ne presseriès pas l'obtention d'un passeport Anglois pour l'expedition du pacquet bot le Washington, que vous me fassiès part que vous avez reçu le même passeport, et que demain à dix-heures du

matin votre courrier partira pour porter vos depeches. Je suis assez embarrassé, Monsieur, à expliquer votre conduite et celle de vos collegues à notre égard. Vous avez arreté vos articles préliminaires sans nous en faire part, quoique les instructions du Congrès vous pourscrivissent de ne rien faire sans la participation du Roi. Vous allez faire luire un espoir certain de paix en Amérique sans même vous informer de l'état de notre négociation. Vous êtes sage et avisé, Monsieur; vous connoissez les bienséances, vous avez rempli toute votre vie vos devoirs. Croiez vous satisfaire à ceux qui vous tiennent au Roi? Je ne veux pas porter plus loin les reflexions, je les abandonne à votre honnêteté. Quand vous aurez bien voulu satisfaire à mes doutes, je prierai le Roi de me mettre en état de répondre à vos demandes.

J'ai l'honneur d'être, avec une véritable considération, Monsieur, votre très humble et très-obéissant serviteur, DE VERGENNES.

Versailles, le 15 Xbre, 1782.

To M. LE COMTE DE VERGENNES.

SIR, *Passy, Dec.* 17, 1782.

I received the letter your Excellency did me the honour of writing to me on the 15th instant. The proposal of having a passport from England was agreed to by me the more willingly, as I at that time had hopes of obtaining some money to send in the Washington, and the passport would have made its transportation safer, with that of our dispatches, and of yours also, if you had thought fit to make use of the occasion. Your Excellency objected, as I understood it, that the English ministers by their letters sent in the same ship, might convey inconvenient expectations into America. It was therefore I proposed not to press for the passport till your preliminaries were also agreed to. They have sent the passport without being pressed to do it, and they have sent no letters to go under it, and ours will prevent the inconvenience apprehended. In a subsequent conversation your Excellency mentioned your intention of sending some of the King's cutters, whence I imagined that detaining the Washington was no longer necessary; and it was certainly incumbent on us to give Congress as early an account as possible of our proceedings, who might think it extremely strange to hear of them by other means, without a line from us. I acquainted your Excellency however with our intention of dispatching that ship, supposing you might possibly have something to send by her.

Nothing has been agreed in the preliminaries contrary to the interests of France;

and no peace is to take place between us and England, till you have concluded yours. Your observation is however apparently just, that in not consulting you before they were signed, we have been guilty of neglecting a point of *bienseance*. But as this was not from want of respect for the King, whom we all love and honour, we hope it will be excused, and that the great work which has hitherto been so happily conducted, is so nearly brought to perfection, and is so glorious to his reign, will not be ruined by a single indiscretion of ours. And certainly the whole edifice sinks to the ground immediately, if you refuse on that account to give us any farther assistance.

We have not yet dispatched the ship, and I beg leave to wait upon you on Friday for your answer.

It is not possible for any one to be more sensible than I am, of what I and every American owe to the King, for the many and great benefits and favours he has bestowed upon us. All my letters to America are proofs of this; all tending to make the same impressions on the minds of my countrymen, that I felt in my own. And I believe that no prince was ever more beloved and respected by his own subjects than the King is by the people of the United States. The English, I just now learn, flatter themselves they have already divided us. I hope this little misunderstanding will therefore be kept a perfect secret, and that they will find themselves totally mistaken. With great and sincere respect, I am, Sir, your Excellency's most obedient and most humble servant, B. FRANKLIN.

A M. FRANKLIN.

Versailles, le 25 Xbre. 1782.

J'ai l'honneur de vous envoyer, Monsieur, mes dépeches pour M. le Chevalier de la Luzerne: le paquet est volumineux, mais il renferme beaucoup de duplicats.

Je voudrois pouvoir lui mander que notre négociation est au même point que la votre, mais elle en est encore fort éloignée. Je ne puis même prevoir quelle en sera l'issue, car les difficultés naissent des facilités aux quelles nous nous sommes prêtés. Il sera bon, Monsieur, que vous en préveniès le Congrès pour le prémunir contre tout ce qui peut arriver. Je ne désespère pas, j'espère plutôt, mais tout est encore incertain.

J'ai l'honneur d'être, avec une parfaite considération, Monsieur, votre très humble et très obéissant serviteur, DE VERGENNES.

To Richard Oswald, Esq.

Sir, *Passy, Jan.* 14, 1783.

I am much obliged by your information of your intended trip to England; I heartily wish you a good journey, and a speedy return, and request your kind care of a packet for Mr. Hodgson.

I inclose two papers that were read at different times by me to the commissioners; they may serve to show if you should have occasion, what was urged on the part of America on certain points; or may help to refresh your memory. I send you also another paper which I once read to you separately. It contains a proposition for improving the law of nations, by prohibiting the plundering of unarmed and use fully employed people. I rather wish than expect that it will be adopted. But I think it may be offered with a better grace by a country that is likely to suffer least and gain most by continuing the ancient practice; which is our case, as the American ships laden only with the gross productions of the earth cannot be so valuable as yours filled with sugars or with manufactures. It has not yet been considered by my colleagues; but if you should think or find that it might be acceptable on your side, I would try to get it inserted in the general treaty. I think it will do honour to the nations that establish it. With great and sincere esteem, I am, Sir, your most obedient and most humble servant, B. F.

Proposition relative to privateering, &c. communicated to Mr. Oswald.

It is for the interest of humanity in general, that the occasions of war, and the inducements to it should be diminished.

If rapine is abolished, one of the encouragements to war is taken away, and peace therefore more likely to continue and be lasting.

The practice of robbing merchants on the high seas, a remnant of the ancient piracy, though it may be accidentally beneficial to particular persons, is far from being profitable to all engaged in it, or to the nation that authorizes it. In the beginning of a war some rich ships not upon their guard are surprized and taken. This encourages the first adventurers to fit out more armed vessels, and many others to do the same. But the enemy at the same time become more careful, arm their merchant ships better, and render them not so easy to be taken; they go also more under protection of convoys: thus while the privateers to take them are multiplied, the vessels subject to be taken and the chances of profit are diminished, so that many cruizes are made wherein the expenses overgo the gains; and as is the case in other lotteries, though particulars have got prizes, the mass of adven-

turers are losers, the whole expence of fitting out all the privateers during a war, being much greater than the whole amount of goods taken. Then there is the national loss of all the labour of so many men during the time they have been employed in robbing; who besides spend what they get in riot, drunkenness, and debauchery, lose their habits of industry, are rarely fit for any sober business after a peace, and serve only to increase the number of highwaymen and housebreakers. Even the undertakers who have been fortunate, are by sudden wealth led into expensive living, the habit of which continues when the means of supporting it ceases, and finally ruins them. A just punishment for their having wantonly and unfeelingly ruined many honest innocent traders and their families, whose subsistence was employed in serving the common interests of mankind.

Should it be agreed and become a part of the law of nations, that the cultivators of the earth are not to be molested or interrupted in their peaceable and useful employment, the inhabitants of the sugar islands would perhaps come under the protection of such a regulation, which would be a great advantage to the nations who at present hold those islands, since the cost of sugar to the consumer in those nations, consists not merely in the price he pays for it by the pound, but in the accumulated charge of all the taxes he pays in every war to fit out fleets and maintain troops for the defence of the islands that raise the sugar, and the ships that bring it home. But the expence of treasure is not all. A celebrated philosophical writer remarks, that when he considered the wars made in Africa for prisoners to raise sugar in America, the numbers slain in those wars, the numbers that being crowded in ships perish in the transportation, and the numbers that die under the severities of slavery, he could scarce look on a morsel of sugar without conceiving it spotted with human blood. If he had considered also the blood of one another which the white nations shed in fighting for those islands, he would have imagined his sugar not as spotted only, but as thoroughly died red. On these accounts I am persuaded that the subjects of the Emperor of Germany, and the Empress of Russia, who have no sugar islands, consume sugar cheaper at Vienna and Moscow, with all the charge of transporting it after its arrival in Europe, than the citizens of London or of Paris. And I sincerely believe, that if France and England were to decide by throwing dice which should have the whole of their sugar islands, the loser in the throw would be the gainer. The future expence of defending them would be saved: the sugars would be bought cheaper by all Europe if the inhabitants might make it without interruption, and whoever imported the sugar, the same revenue might be raised by duties at the custom houses of the

nation that consumed it. And on the whole I conceive it would be better for the nations now possessing sugar colonies to give up their claim to them, let them govern themselves, and put them under the protection of all the powers of Europe as neutral countries, open to the commerce of all, the profits of the present monopolies being by no means equivalent to the expence of maintaining them.

ARTICLE.

If war should hereafter arise between Great Britain and the United States, which God forbid, the merchants of either country then residing in the other, shall be allowed to remain nine months to collect their debts, and settle their affairs, and may depart freely, carrying off all their effects without molestation or hinderance. And all fishermen, all cultivators of the earth, and all artizans or manufacturers unarmed, and inhabiting unfortified towns, villages or places, who labour for the common subsistence and benefit of mankind, and peaceably follow their respective employments, shall be allowed to continue the same, and shall not be molested by the armed force of the enemy in whose power by the events of the war they may happen to fall; but if any thing is necessary to be taken from them, for the use of such armed force, the same shall be paid for at a reasonable price. And all merchants or traders with their unarmed vessels, employed in commerce, exchanging the products of different places, and thereby rendering the necessaries, conveniences, and comforts of human life more easy to obtain, and more general, shall be allowed to pass freely unmolested. And neither of the powers parties to this treaty, shall grant or issue any commission to any private armed vessels empowering them to take or destroy such trading ships, or interrupt such commerce.

LETTRE DE M. LE COMPTE DE VERGENNES À MONSIEUR FRANKLIN.

Il est essentiel, Monsieur, que je puisse avoir l'honneur de conferer avec vous, avec M. Adams, et avec ceux de Messieurs vos collegues, qui peuvent se trouver à Paris. Je vous prie, en consèquence, Monsieur, de vouloir bien inviter ces Messieurs de se rendre à Versailles avec vous Lundi avant dix heures du matin. Il seroit bon que vous amenassies, Monsieur, votre petit fils avec vous, il pourra nous etre necessaire pour rendre plusieurs choses d'Anglois en Francois, et même pour ecrire. L'objet dont j'ai à vous entretenir est très interressant pour les Etats Unis, vos maitres.

J'ai l'honneur d'etre avec une parfaite consideration, Monsieur, votre très humble et très obeissant serviteur, DE VERGENNES.

Versailles, le Samedi soir 18 *Janvier*, 1783.

A. M. LE COMPTE DE VERGENNES.

SIR, *Passy, Jan.* 18, 1783, *at ten* P. M.

Agreeable to the notice just received from your Excellency, I shall acquaint Mr. Adams with your desire to see us on Monday before ten o'clock at Versailles, and we shall endeavour to be punctual. My other colleagues are absent, Mr. Laurens being gone to Bath in England to recover his health, and Mr. Jay into Normandy. With great respect I have the honour to be, Sir, your Excellency's, &c. B. FRANKLIN.

I shall bring my grandson as you desire.

FROM B. VAUGHAN ESQ. TO DR. FRANKLIN.

MY DEAREST SIR, (Private) *Paris, Jan.* 18, 1783.

I cannot but in the most earnest manner and from *recent* circumstances, press your going *early* to Versailles to-morrow; and I have considerable reason to think, that your appearance there will not displease the person whom you address. I am of opinion that it is very likely that you will have the glory of having concluded the peace, by this visit; at least I am sure if the deliberations of to-morrow evening end unfavourably, that there is the strongest appearance of war; and if they end favourably, perhaps little difficulty may attend the rest.

After all, the peace will have as much that is conceded in it, as England can in any shape be made just now to relish; owing to the stubborn demands principally of Spain, who would not I believe upon any motive recede from her conquests. What I wrote about Gibraltar, arrived after the subject as I understand was canvassed, and when it of course must have appeared impolitic eagerly and immediately to revive it.

You reproved me, or rather reproved a political scheme yesterday, of which I have heard more said favourably by your *friends* at *Paris*, than by any persons whatever in London. But do you, my dear sir, make *this* peace, and trust our common sense respecting another war. England, said a man of sense to me the other day, will come out of the war like a convalescent out of a disease, and must be re-established by some physic and much regimen. I cannot easily tell in what shape a bankruptcy would come upon England, and still less easily in what mode and degree it would affect us; but if your confederacy mean to bankrupt us now, I am sure we shall lose the great *fear* that would deter us from another war. Your allies therefore for policy, and for humanity's sake, will I hope stop short of this extremity; especially as we should do some mischief first to others, as well as to

ourselves. I am, my dearest Sir, your ever devoted, ever affectionate, and ever obliged, B. VAUGHAN.

DAVID HARTLEY, Esq. M. P. TO DR. FRANKLIN. With propositions.

MY DEAR FRIEND, *London, March* 12, 1783.

It is a long while since I have heard from you, or indeed since I writ to you. I heartily congratulate you on those pacific events which have already happened, and I wish to see all other final steps of conciliation succeed speedily. I send you copies of two papers which I have already communicated to Mr. Laurens; the one called *Conciliatory Propositions in March* 1783; the other *A Sketch of a provisional treaty of Commerce for opening the ports between Great Britain and the United States of America without delay;* to each of which is prefixed a short state of the argument on each head.

As for the news of this country, you have doubtless heard, that Lord Shelburne's administration has for some time been considered as at an end, although no other has been as yet substituted in the place of it. It was understood yesterday, and I believe with good foundation, that what is now called the Portland party have been applied to, and they are now considered as the party most likely to succeed. As far as my wishes go, such an event would be most satisfactory to me. I have known the Duke of Portland for many years, and by experience I know him to be a nobleman of the strictest honour and of the soundest whig principles, sincere and explicit in every thought and transaction, manly in his judgment, and firm in his conduct. The kingdom of Ireland, of which he was lately Lord Lieutenant, bears unanimous testimony to this character of him. The Cavendish family (a good whig name) Mr. Fox, Lord Fitzwilliam &c. &c. form the core of his system and connections. I most earnestly wish to see a firm administration upon a whig foundation, which I should consider as a solid basis on the part of this country for a perpetual correspondence of amity and conciliation with America. I am very anxious to hear of your health. God bless you. Ever your most affectionate,

D. H.

CONCILIATORY PROPOSITIONS, March 1783.

Terms of peace having been agreed upon between Great Britain and France on 20th January 1783, there need not be any farther delay in proceeding to conclude the proposed treaty between Great Britain and the United States of America, upon the basis of the provisional articles of the 30th of Nov. 1782.

It is to be observed that none of the articles of the provisional treaty are to take effect until the conclusion of the definitive treaty with America, at which time likewise all places in the American States in possession of the British arms are to be evacuated, and the British army withdrawn from the United States (by article 7). If therefore it should be wished on the part of Great Britain to bring forward the 5th article respecting the loyalists, before the conclusion of the definitive treaty with America, the bayonet should be withdrawn from the American breast by the voluntary removal of the British troops with all convenient dispatch. This condition of the removal of the troops is likewise necessary before any provisional terms of commerce with America can take place.

By the 6th article of the provisional treaty all future confiscations in America are precluded, although the prosecutions at present subsisting are not to be stopped before the definitive treaty. But if the substantial pledge of returning amity on the part of Great Britain, viz. the removal of the troops, should be voluntarily anticipated, it would be but reasonable that all prosecutions should be immediately abated on the part of America, and to facilitate the removal of the troops, the loyalists may be permitted to remain in safety and unmolested (if they chuse to remain) from the period of removing the troops until twelve months after the definitive treaty.

There is another article of the provisional treaty, the delay of which is much to be lamented, viz. the mutual release of prisoners of war on both sides. As this is an article of reciprocity, both sides from principles of humanity are equally interested to bring it forward into effect speedily; that those unhappy captives may not alone suffer the miseries of war in the time of peace.

Upon these considerations the following supplemental terms of treaty between Great Britain and the United States are proposed.

1. That the British troops shall be withdrawn with all convenient speed.

2. That the commissioners on both sides do proceed to the conclusion of the definitive treaty.

3. That the commissioners do speedily negociate a provisional convention of commerce (hereunto annexed) to take place immediately. The terms of this temporary convention not to be pleaded on either side in the negociation of a final and perpetual treaty of commerce between Great Britain and the United States.

4. That the commissioners do negociate a perpetual treaty of commerce.

5. That all prosecutions of the loyalists in America be immediately abated, and

that they be permitted to remain until twelve months after the definitive treaty unmolested in their endeavours to obtain restitution of their estates.

6. That all prisoners on both sides be immediately released.

7. That intercourse of amity and commerce do immediately take place between Great Britain and the United States of America.

Sketch of a provisional treaty of commerce.

As soon as preliminaries of peace are signed with any independent states, such as Spain, France and Holland, the course of mutual commerce emerges upon the same terms and conditions as were existing antecedent to the war, the new duties imposed during the war excepted. The case between Great Britain and America is different, because America, from a dependent nation before the war, emerges an independent nation after the war. The basis therefore of provisional treaty between Great Britain and the United States would be simply to arrange such points as would emerge after the war, impracticable and discordant to the newly established independence of the American States, and to leave all others as much as possible untouched: For instance, that all instrumental regulations, such as papers, bonds, certificates, oaths, and all other documents should be between Great Britain and the United States upon the same footing and no other than as between Great Britain, and any other independent nation, but that all duties, drawbacks, bounties, rights, privileges, and all pecuniary considerations should emerge into action and effect as before. I say emerge as before not stipulated for any fixed term, because I am speaking of a provisional *treaty*, not of a provisional *bill* of commerce for a specified period. By this means all difficulties which otherwise would be accumulated and obstruct a temporary and provisional act are avoided *in limine*. The ports will be immediately opened upon specified and known conditions. If the legislature of either country think proper to introduce on its own part any new conditions or regulations, even previous to the intended treaty of commerce, that will not shut the ports again generally but only operate *pro tanto* according to the case; on which side soever any novel condition should arise the other will likewise be at liberty to make any corresponding regulations as between independent nations. The great object is to open the ports between Great Britain and the United States immediately on the signature of preliminaries of peace, as between France and Great Britain. By the proposition above stated, Great Britain and France, and Great Britain and the United States respectively on the subject of intercourse of commerce, would emerge again after the war, into situations relatively similar to their situation before the war.

The crown of Great Britain is enabled by the conciliatory act of 1782 to repeal, annul, make void, or suspend for any time or times the operation and effect of any act of parliament, or any clause, provision, matter or thing therein contained relating to the colonies or plantations now become the United States of America; and therefore the crown is not only competent to conclude, but likewise to carry into effect any provisional treaty of commerce with America. The first foundation must be laid in the total repeal of the prohibitory act of December 1775, not only as prohibiting commerce between Great Britain, and the United States, but as the corner stone of the war; by giving up universally all American property at sea to military plunder without any redress to be obtained by law in any British court of Admiralty. After this all obstructions from the Act of Navigation and other acts regulating the commerce of the States of America (formerly dependent upon Great Britain), may be removed. Instructions may be sent to the commissioners of the customs to dispense with bonds, certificates, &c. which by the old laws are required to be discharged or attested by supposed governors, naval or custom-house officers in America. The questions of drawbacks, bounties, &c. after opening the ports, may remain free points of discussion and regulation, as between states having no commercial treaty subsisting between them. As the crown is competent to open an intercourse of commerce with America by treaty, this mode is preferable to any act of parliament, which may be only a jealous and suspicious convention *ex parte*. This mode by treaty avoids the accumulated difficulties which might otherwise obstruct the first opening of the ports by act of parliament, and above all it secures an alternate binding part of the bargain, which no act of parliament can do.

Breviate of the treaty, viz. provisional for intercourse and commerce between Great Britain and the United States of America.

1. That all ports shall be mutually open for intercourse and commerce.

2. And therefore the King of Great Britain agrees for the repeal of the prohibitory acts, viz. 16 Geo. 3, chap. 5, &c. The King of Great Britain likewise agrees by instructions according to the laws of Great Britain to his commissioners of customs and other officers to remove all obstructions to American ships, either entering inwards or clearing outwards, which may arise from any acts of parliament heretofore regulating the commerce of the American states, under the description of British colonies or plantations, so as to accommodate every circumstance to the reception of their ships, as the ships of independent states.

3. All duties, drawbacks, bounties, rights, priviledges, and all other money considerations shall remain respecting the United States of America upon the same

footing as they now remain respecting the province of Nova Scotia in America, or as if the aforesaid states had remained dependent upon Great Britain. All this subject to regulations or alterations by any future acts of the parliament of Great Britain.

4. On the part of the states of America, it is agreed that all laws prohibiting the commerce with Great Britain shall be repealed.

5. Agreed upon the same part that all ships, and merchandize of the British dominions shall be admitted upon the same terms as before the war, except any imposts laid during the war. All this subject to future regulations or alterations by the legislatures of American States respectively.

6. The principles and spirit of this treaty to be supported on either side by any necessary supplemental arrangements. No tacit compliance on the part of America in any subordinate points to be argued at any time hereafter to the prejudice of their independence.

To David Hartley, Esq. M. P.

Dear Sir, *Passy, March* 23, 1783.

I received the letter you did me the honour of writing to me requesting a recommendation to America of Mr. Joshua Grigby. I have accordingly written one; and having an opportunity the other day, I sent it under cover to Mr. Benjamin Vaughan. The general proclamations you wished for, suspending or rather putting an end to hostilities, are now published; so that your "heart is at rest," and mine with it. You may depend on my joining my hearty endeavours with yours, in "cultivating conciliatory principles between our two countries," and I may venture to assure you, that if your bill for a provisional establishment of the commerce had passed as at first proposed, a stipulation on our part in the definitive treaty to allow reciprocal and equal advantages andprivileges to your subjects, would have been readily agreed to. With great and sincere esteem, I am ever, &c.

B. Franklin.

D. Hartley, Esq. M. P. to Dr. Franklin.

My Dear Friend, *London, March* 31, 1783.

I send you a paper entitled *Supplemental Treaty*, the substance of which I sent you some time ago, as I read it, in part of a speech in the House of Commons. I have given a copy of it to Mr. L., as the grounds upon which my friend the Duke of P. would have wished that any administration in which he might have taken a part should have treated with the American ministers. All

negociations for the formation of a ministry in concert with the Duke of P. are at an end.

The 10th article, which is supposed to be referred to the definitive treaty, is a renewal of the same proposition which I moved in parliament some years ago, viz. on the 9th of April, 1778. I see nothing inconsistent with that proposition, either in the declaration of independence or in the treaty with France. Let it therefore remain, and emerge after the war as a point untouched by the war. I assure you my consent should not be wanting to extend this principle between all the nations upon earth. I know full well that those nations to which you and I are bound by birth and consanguinity would reap the earliest fruits from it; *owing no man hate, and envying no man's happiness*, I should rejoice in the lot of my own country, and on her part say to America *Nos duo turba sumus*. I send you likewise enclosed with this some sentiments respecting the principles of some late negociations, drawn up in the shape of parliamentary motions[1] by my brother, who joins with me in sincerest good wishes to you for health and happiness, and for the peace of our respective countries, and of mankind. Your ever affectionate, D. H.

Supplemental Treaty between Great Britain, and the United States of North America.

1. That the British troops be withdrawn from the United States with all convenient speed.

2. That all farther prosecutions of loyalists in America be immediately abated, and that they be permitted to remain until twelve months after the definitive treaty with America in safety and unmolested, in their endeavours to obtain restitution of their estates.

3. That all ports shall be mutually opened for intercourse and commerce, between Great Britain and the United States.

4. Agreed on the part of Great Britain that all prohibitory acts shall be repealed, and that all obstructions to American ships either entering inwards or clearing outwards, shall be removed, which may arise from any acts of parliament heretofore regulating the commerce of the American States, under the description of British colonies and plantations, so as to accommodate every circumstance to the reception of their ships, as the ships of independent States.

5. Agreed on the part of Great Britain that all duties, rights, privileges, and all

[1] See the same, following the *Supplemental Treaty*.

pecuniary considerations shall remain respecting the United States of America, upon the same footing as they now remain respecting the province of Nova Scotia, or as if the said States had remained dependent upon Great Britain. All this subject to regulations and alterations by any future acts of the parliament of Great Britain.

6. On the part of the American States it is agreed, that all laws prohibiting commerce with Great Britain shall be repealed.

7. Agreed on the part of the American States, that all ships and merchandize of the British dominions shall be admitted upon the same terms as before the war. All this subject to future regulations or alterations by the legislatures of the American States respectively.

8. That all prisoners on both sides be immediately released.

9. The spirit and principles of this treaty to be supported on either side by any necessary supplemental arrangements. No tacit compliance on the part of the American States in any subordinate points to be urged at any time hereafter in derogation of their independence.

Separate article to be referred to the definitive treaty.

10. Neither shall the independence of the United States be construed any farther than as independence, absolute and unlimited in matters of government as well as commerce. Not into alienation, and therefore the subjects of his Britannic Majesty and the citizens of the United States shall mutually be considered as natural born subjects, and enjoy all rights and privileges as such in the respective dominions and territories, in the manner heretofore accustomed.

Paper mentioned in the close of Mr. Hartley's letter of March 31, 1783.

1. That it is the opinion of this house, that whenever Great Britain thought proper to acknowledge the independence of America, the mode of putting it into effect most honourably for this country, would have been to have made the declaration of independence previous to the commencement of any treaty with any other power.

2. That a deviation from that line of conduct, has the effect of appearing to grant the independence of America solely to the demands of the House of Bourbon, and not, as was the real state of the case, from a change in the sentiments of this country, as to the object and continuance of the American war.

3. That when this house by its vote against the farther prosecution of offensive war in America, had given up the point of contest and adopted a conciliatory disposition, the pursuing those principles by an immediate and liberal negociation upon

the basis of independence, at the same time expressing a readiness to conclude a general peace with the allies of America upon honourable terms, would have been the most likely way to promote a mutual and beneficial intercourse between the two countries,—to establish peace upon a firm foundation, and would have prevented the House of Bourbon from having a right to claim any farther obligations from America, as the assertors of their independence.

4. That the minister who advised the late negociations for peace has neglected to make use of those advantages which the determination of the House put him in possession of: that, by his delay in authorizing persons properly to negociate with the American Commissioners, he has shown a reluctance to acting upon the liberal principles of granting independence to America, as the determination of Great Britain upon mature consideration of the question; and has by such methods given advantage to the enemies of this country to promote and confirm that commerce and connection between the United States of America and themselves, which during the contest have been turned from their natural channel with this country, and which this peace so concluded has not yet contributed to restore.

THE RIGHT HON. C. J. FOX, *Secretary of State,*
To His Excellency B. FRANKLIN, ESQ.

SIR,

Although it is unnecessary for me to introduce to your acquaintance a gentleman so well known to you as Mr. Hartley, who will have the honour of delivering to you this letter, yet it may be proper for me to inform you that he has the full and entire confidence of his Majesty's ministers upon the subject of his mission.

Permit me, Sir, to take this opportunity of assuring you how happy I should esteem myself if it were to prove my lot to be the instrument of compleating a real and substantial reconciliation between two countries formed by nature to be in a state of friendship one with the other, and thereby to put the finishing hand to a building, in laying the first stone of which I may fairly boast that I had some share.

I have the honour to be, with every sentiment of regard and esteem, Sir, your most obedient humble servant, C. J. Fox.

St. James's, April 19, 1783.

To David Hartley, Esq. M. P.

Dear Friend, *Passy, May* 8, 1783.

I send you enclosed the copies you desired of the papers I read to you yesterday.[1] I should be happy if I could see, before I die, the proposed improvement of the law of nations established. The miseries of mankind would be diminished by it, and the happiness of millions secured and promoted. If the practice of *privateering* could be profitable to any civilized nation, it might be so to us Americans, since we are so situated on the globe, as that the rich commerce of Europe with the West Indies, consisting of manufactures, sugars, &c. is obliged to pass before our doors, which enables us to make short and cheap cruizes, while our own commerce is in such bulky low-priced articles as that ten of our ships taken by you are not equal in value to one of yours, and you must come far from home at a great expence to look for them. I hope therefore that this proposition, if made by us, will appear in its true light, as having humanity only for its motive. I do not wish to see a new Barbary rising in America, and our long extended coast occupied by piratical States. I fear lest our privateering success in the two last wars should already have given our people too strong a relish for that most mischievous kind of gaming, mixed blood; and if a stop is not now put to the practice, mankind may hereafter be more plagued with American corsairs than they have been and are with the Turkish. Try, my friend, what you can do, in procuring for your nation the glory of being, though the greatest naval power, the first who voluntarily relinquished the advantage that power seems to give them, of plundering others, and thereby impeding the mutual communications among men of the gifts of God, and rendering miserable multitudes of merchants and their families, artizans, and cultivators of the earth, the most peaceable and innocent part of the human species. With great esteem and affection, I am ever, my dear friend, yours most sincerely,

B. Franklin.

To Henry Laurens, Esq.

Dear Sir, *Passy, July* 6, 1783.

We have been honoured with several of your letters, and we have talked of writing to you, but it has been delayed. I will therefore write a few lines in my private capacity.

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[1] See the Proposition about Privateering, annexed to Letter to R. Oswald, Esq. January 14, 1783.

Our negociations go on slowly, every proposition being sent to England, and answers not returning very speedily.

Captain Barney arrived here last Wednesday, and brought dispatches for us as late as the first of June. The preliminary articles are ratified. But General Carleton, in violation of those articles, has sent away a great number of negroes, alledging that freedom having been promised them by a proclamation, the honour of the nation was concerned, &c. Probably another reason may be, that if they had been restored to their masters, Britain could not have hoped any thing from such another proclamation hereafter.

Mr. Hartley called yesterday to tell us, that he had received a letter from Mr. Fox, assuring him that our suspicions of affected delays or change of system on their side were groundless; and that they were sincerely desirous to finish as soon as possible. If this be so, and your health will permit the journey, I could wish your return as soon as possible. I want you here on many accounts, and should be glad of your assistance in considering and answering our public letters. There are matters in them of which I cannot conveniently give you an account at present.

Nothing could be more seasonable than success in the project you proposed, but we have now very little expectation.

Please to give my love to your valuable and amiable son and daughter, and believe me with sincere esteem, &c. B. FRANKLIN.

EXTRACT OF A LETTER TO ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON, ESQ.

Passy, July 22, 1783.

You have complained sometimes with reason of not hearing often from your foreign ministers; we have had cause to make the same complaints, six full months having intervened between the latest date of your preceding letters and the receipt of those per Captain Barney. During all this time we were ignorant of the reception of the provisional treaty, and the sentiments of Congress upon it, which if we had received sooner might have forwarded the proceedings on the definitive treaty, and perhaps brought it to a conclusion at a time more favourable than the present. But these occasional interruptions of correspondence are the inevitable consequences of a state of war, and of such remote situations.

Barney had a short passage, and arrived some days before Colonel Ogden, who also brought dispatches from you, all of which are come safe to hand.

We the Commissioners have in our joint capacity written a letter to you, which

you will receive with this. I shall now answer yours of March 26, May 9, and May 31.

It gave me great pleasure to learn by the first, that the news of the peace diffused general satisfaction. I will not now take upon me to justify the apparent reserve respecting this Court at the signature, which you disapprove. We have touched upon it in our general letter. I do not see, however, that they have much reason to complain of that transaction. Nothing was stipulated to their prejudice, and none of the stipulations were to have force but by a subsequent act of their own. I suppose, indeed, that they have not complained of it, or you would have sent me a copy of the complaint, that we might have answered it. I long since satisfied Count de Vergennes about it here. We did what appeared to all of us best at the time, and if we have done wrong, the Congress will do right, after hearing us, to censure us. Their nomination of five persons to the service, seems to mark that they had some dependance on our joint judgment, since one alone could have made a treaty by direction of the French ministry as well as twenty. I will only add, that with respect to myself, neither the letter from Mr. Marbois, handed to us through the British negociators, (a suspicious channel) nor the conversations respecting the fishery, the boundaries, the royalists, &c. recommending moderation in our demands, are of weight sufficient in my mind, to fix an opinion that this court wished to restrain us in obtaining any degree of advantage we could prevail on our enemies to accord; since those discourses are fairly resolvable by supposing a very natural apprehension, that we relying too much on the ability of France to continue the war in our favour, and supply us constantly with money, might insist on more advantages than the English would be willing to grant, and thereby lose the opportunity of making peace, so necessary to all our friends.

When the commercial article mentioned in yours of the 26th was struck out of our proposed preliminaries, by the then British ministry, the reason given was that sundry acts of parliament still in force were against it, and must be first repealed, which I believe was actually their intention, and sundry bills were accordingly brought in for that purpose. But new ministers with different principles succeeding, a commercial proclamation totally different from those bills has lately appeared. I send enclosed a copy of it. We shall try what can be done in the definitive treaty, towards setting aside that proclamation; but if it should be persisted in, it will then be a matter worthy the attentive discussion of Congress, whether it will be most prudent to retort with a similar regulation in order to force its repeal, which may possibly tend to bring on another quarrel, or to let it pass without notice, and leave

it to its own inconvenience or rather impracticability in the execution, and to the complaints of the West India planters, who must all pay much dearer for our produce under those restrictions. I am not enough master of the course of our commerce, to give an opinion on this particular question; and it does not behove me to do it; yet I have seen so much embarrassment and so little advantage in all the restraining and compulsive systems, that I feel myself strongly inclined to believe that a State, which leaves all her ports open to all the world upon equal terms, will by that means have foreign commodities cheaper, and sell its own productions dearer, and be on the whole most prosperous. I have heard some merchants say, that there is ten per cent. difference between *Will you buy?* and *Will you sell?* When foreigners bring us their goods, they want to part with them speedily, that they may purchase their cargoes and dispatch their ships, which are at constant charges in our ports. We have then the advantage of their, *Will you buy?* and when they demand our produce, we have the advantage of their, *Will you sell?* and the concurring demands of a number also contribute to raise our prices. Thus both these questions are in our favour at home; against us abroad. The employing, however, of our own ships, and raising a breed of seamen among us, though it should not be a matter of so much private profit as some imagine, is nevertheless of political importance, and must have weight in considering this subject.

The judgment you make of the conduct of France in the peace, and the greater glory acquired by her moderation than even by her arms, appears to me perfectly just. The character of this Court and nation seems of late years to be considerably changed. The ideas of aggrandisement by conquest, are out of fashion; and those of commerce are more enlightened, and more generous than heretofore. We shall soon, I believe, feel something of this, in our being admitted to greater freedom of trade with their islands. The wise here think France great enough, and its ambition at present seems to be only that of justice and magnanimity towards other nations, fidelity, and utility to its allies.

I have received no answer yet from Congress to my request of being dismissed from this service. They should methinks reflect, that if they continue me here, the faults I may henceforth commit through the infirmities of age, will be rather their's than mine.

I am glad my journal afforded you any pleasure. I will, as you desire, endeavour to continue it.

I am sorry to find that you have thoughts of quitting the service. I do not think your place can be easily well supplied. You mention that an entire new arrange-

ment with respect to foreign affairs is under consideration: I wish to know whether any notice is likely to be taken in it of my grandson. He has now gone through an apprenticeship of near seven years in the ministerial business, and is very capable of serving the States in that line, as possessing all the requisites of knowledge, zeal, activity, language, and address. He is liked here, and Count de Vergennes has expressed to me in warm terms his very good opinion of him. The late Swedish ambassador Count de Creutz, who is gone home to be prime minister, desired I would endeavour to procure his being sent to Sweden with a public character, assuring me that he should be glad to receive him there as our minister, and that he knew it would be pleasing to the King. The present Swedish ambassador has also proposed the same thing to me, as you will see by a letter of his which I enclose. One of the Danish ministers, M. Waltersdorff, (who will probably be sent in a public character to Congress) has also expressed his wish that my grandson may be sent to Denmark. But it is not my custom to solicit employments for myself or any of my family, and I shall not do it in this case. I only hope that if he is not to be employed in your new arrangement, I may be informed of it as soon as possible, that while I have strength left for it, I may accompany him in a tour to Italy, returning through Germany, which I think he may make to more advantage with me than alone, and which I have long promised to afford him, as a reward for his faithful service, and his tender filial attachment to me.

Our people who were prisoners in England are now all discharged. During the whole war, those who were in Forton prison near Portsmouth, were much befriended by the constant charitable care of Mr. Wren, a Presbyterian minister there; who spared no pains to assist them in their sickness and distress, by procuring and distributing among them the contributions of good Christians, and prudently dispensing the allowance I made them, which gave him a deal of trouble, but he went through it cheerfully. I think some particular notice should be taken of this good man. I wish the Congress would enable me to make him a present, and that some of our Universities would confer upon him the degree of Doctor.

The Duke of Manchester, who has always been our friend in the House of Lords, is now here Ambassador from England. I dine with him to-day (26th) and if any thing of importance occurs, I will add it in a postscript.

Be pleased to present my dutiful respects to the Congress, assure them of my most faithful services, and believe me to be, with great and sincere esteem, Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

To His Excellency M. le Comte de Vergennes.

Sir, *Passy, Aug.* 16, 1783.

I have the honour to inform your Excellency, that the English ministry do not agree to any of the propositions that have been made either by us, or by their minister here; and they have sent over a plan for the definitive treaty, which consists merely of the preliminaries formerly signed, with a short introductory paragraph, and another at the conclusion, confirming and establishing the said preliminary articles. My colleagues seem inclined to sign this with Mr. Hartley, and so to finish the affair. I am, with respect, Sir, your Excellency's &c. B. F.

Mons. de Rayneval, (under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs) a Mons. Franklin.

A Versailles, le 29 Aout, 1783.

J'ai rendu compte à M. le Comte de Vergennes, Monsieur, de la difficulté que fait M. Hartley de signer à Versailles, et ce ministre m'a chargé de vous mander que rien ne devoit vous empêcher de signer à Paris Mercredi prochain, jour designé pour la signature des autres traités : mais il vous prie d'indiquer à Mr. Hartley 9 heures du matin, et d'envoyer ici un exprès immédiatement après votre signature faite. M. de Vergennes veut etre assuré que votre besogne est consommée en même tems que la sienne. Vous recevez pour Mercredi un billet d'invitation ainsi que Messieurs vos collegues et Mons. Hartley; je presume que celui-ci n'y trouvera aucune difficulté.

J'ai l'honneur d'etre avec un parfait attachement, Monsieur, votre très humble et très obéissant serviteur, De Rayneval.

David Hartley, Esq. M. P. to Dr. Franklin.

My Dear Friend, *Bath, Sept.* 24, 1783.

I am at present at Bath with my dearest sister, whom I have found as well as I could have expected, and I hope with reasonable prospect of recovery in time. I have seen my friends in the ministry, and hope things will go well; with them I am sure all is right and firm. The chief part of the cabinet ministers are out of town, but there will be a full cabinet held in a few days, in which a specific proposition in the nature of a temporary convention will be given in instructions to me. I imagine, nearly upon the ground of my memorial of May 19, 1783, which I delivered to the American ministers; viz. " American ships not to bring foreign manufactures into Great Britain, nor to trade directly between the

British West Indies and Great Britain," all the rest to be as before the war. I expect that something to this effect will be their determination, in the offer, and if it should be so, I shall hope not to meet with difficulty on your parts. I want to see some specific beginning. As to any farther proposition respecting the trade between Great Britain and the British West Indies, I doubt whether any such can be discussed before the meeting of parliament. I wish to look forward not only to the continuation of peace between our two countries, but to the improvement of reconciliation into alliance, and therefore I wish the two parties to be disposed to accommodate each other, without the strict account by weights and scales as between aliens and strangers, actuated towards each other by no other principle than cold and equalizing indifference. Friendly dispositions presumed have their fairest chance of being realized, but if we should set out presuming against them, the good which might have happened may be prevented. Pray remember me to your three colleagues, and to all friends. Yours ever most affectionately, D. HARTLEY.

P. S. I have put in a word for our quaker article, and I hope with some impression.

To DAVID HARTLEY, Esq.

MY DEAR FRIEND, *Passy, Oct.* 16, 1783.

I have nothing material to write to you respecting public affairs, but I cannot let Mr. Adams who will see you, go without a line to enquire after your welfare, to inform you of mine, and assure you of my constant respect and attachment.

I think with you that your Quaker article is a good one, and that men will in time have sense enough to adopt it, but I fear that time is not yet come.

What would you think of a proposition if I should make it, of a family compact between England, France, and America? America would be as happy as the Sabine girls, if she could be the means of uniting in perpetual peace her father and her husband. What repeated follies are those repeated wars? You do not want to conquer and govern one another. Why then should you be continually employed in injuring and destroying one another? How many excellent things might have been done to promote the internal welfare of each country; what bridges, roads, canals, and other useful public works and institutions tending to the common felicity, might have been made and established, with the money and men foolishly spent during the last seven centuries by our mad wars in doing one another mischief?

You are near neighbours, and each have very respectable qualities. Learn to be quiet and to respect each other's rights. You are all Christians. One is the most Christian king, and the other defender of the faith. Manifest the propriety of these titles by your future conduct. By this, says Christ, shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye love one another. Seek peace, and ensue it. Adieu, yours &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

To DAVID HARTLEY, ESQ.

Passy, Oct. 22, 1783.

I received my dear friend's kind letter of the 4th instant from Bath, with your proposed temporary convention which you desire me to shew to my colleagues. They are both by this time in London, where you will undoubtedly see and converse with them on the subject. The apprehension you mention that the cement of the confederation may be annihilated, &c. has not I think any foundation. There is sense enough in America to take care of their own china vase. I see much in your papers about our divisions and distractions, but I hear little of them from America; and I know that most of the letters said to come from there with such accounts are mere London fictions. I will consider attentively the proposition above mentioned against the return of my colleagues, when I hope our commission will be arrived. I rejoice to hear that your dear sister's recovery advances, and that your brother is well: please to present my affectionate respects to them, and believe me ever, yours &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

EXTRACT OF A LETTER TO THE HON. ROBERT MORRIS.

(*Superintendant of Finances* United States)

Passy, Dec. 25, 1783.

"The remissness of our people in paying taxes is highly blameable, the unwillingness to pay them is still more so. I see in some resolutions of town meetings, a remonstrance against giving Congress a power to take, as they call it, *the people's money* out of their pockets though only to pay the interest and principal of debts duly contracted. They seem to mistake the point. Money justly due from the people is their creditor's money, and no longer the money of the people, who, if they withhold it, should be compelled to pay by some law. All property indeed except the savage's temporary cabbin, his bow, his matchuat, and other little acquisitions absolutely necessary for his subsistence, seems to me to be the creature of public convention. Hence the public has the right of regulating

descents, and all other conveyances of property, and even of limiting the quantity and the uses of it. All the property that is necessary to a man for the conservation of the individual and the propagation of the species, is his natural right, which none can justly deprive him of; but all property superfluous to such purposes is the property of the public, who by their laws have created it, and who may therefore by other laws dispose of it whenever the welfare of the public shall desire such disposition. He that does not like civil society on these terms, let him retire and live among savages. He can have no right to the benefits of society who will not pay his club towards the support of it.

The Marquis de la Fayette who loves to be employed in our affairs, and is often very useful, has lately had several conversations with the ministers and persons concerned in forming new regulations respecting the commerce between our two countries, which are not yet concluded. I thought it therefore well to communicate to him a copy of your letter which contains so many sensible and just observations on that subject. He will make a proper use of them, and perhaps they may have more weight as appearing to come from a Frenchman, than they would have if it were known that they were the observations of an American. I perfectly agree with you in all the sentiments you have expressed on this occasion.

I am sorry for the public's sake that you are about to quit your office, but on personal considerations I shall congratulate you. For I cannot conceive of a more happy man, than he who having been long loaded with public cares, finds himself relieved from them, and enjoying private repose in the bosom of his friends and family.

With sincere regard and attachment, I am ever, dear Sir, yours &c. B. F."

EXTRACT OF A LETTER TO HIS EXCELLENCY THOMAS MIFFLIN, ESQ. *President of Congress.*

Passy, Dec. 25, 1783.

"It was certainly disagreeable to the English ministers, that all their treaties for peace were carried on under the eye of the French court. This began to appear towards the conclusion, when Mr. Hartley refused going to Versailles to sign there with the other powers, our definitive treaty, and insisted on its being done at Paris, which we in good humour complied with, but at an earlier hour, that we might have time to acquaint le Comte de Vergennes before he was to sign with the Duke of Manchester. The Dutch definitive was not then ready, and the British court now insisted on finishing it either at London or the Hague. If

heretofore the commission to us, which has been so long delayed, is still intended, perhaps it will be well to instruct us to treat either here or at London, as we may find most convenient. The treaty may be conducted even there in concert and in the confidence of communication with the ministers of our friends, whose advice may be of use to us.

With respect to the British court, we should I think be constantly upon our guard, and impress strongly upon our minds, that though it has made peace with us, it is not in truth reconciled to us, or to its loss of us; but still flatters itself with hopes that some change of the affairs of Europe, or some disunion among ourselves may afford them an opportunity of recovering their dominion, punishing those who have most offended, and securing our future dependence. It is easy to see by the general turn of the ministerial newspapers; (light things indeed as straws and feathers, but like them they show which way the wind blows) and by the malignant improvement their ministers make in all foreign courts, of every little accident at Philadelphia, the resolves of some town meetings, the reluctance to pay taxes &c. &c. all which are exaggerated to represent our governments as so many anarchies, of which the people themselves are weary, the congress as having lost its influence, being no longer respected: I say it is easy to see from this conduct, that they bear us no good will, and that they wish the reality of what they are pleased to imagine. They have too a numerous royal progeny to provide for, some of whom are educated in the military line. In these circumstances we cannot be too careful to preserve the friendship we have acquired abroad, and the union we have established at home, to secure our credit by a punctual discharge of our obligations of every kind, and our reputation by the wisdom of our councils; since we know not how soon we may have fresh occasion for friends, for credit, and for reputation.

The extravagant misrepresentations of our political state in foreign countries, made it appear necessary to give them better information, which I thought could not be more effectually and authentically done than by publishing a translation into French, now the most general language in Europe, of the book of constitutions which had been printed by order of congress. This I accordingly got well done, and presented two copies handsomely bound to every foreign minister here, one for himself, the other more elegant, for his sovereign. It has been well taken, and has afforded a matter of surprize to many who had conceived mean ideas of the state of civilization in America, and could not have expected so much political knowledge and sagacity had existed in our wilderness: and from all parts I have the satisfaction to hear that our constitutions in general are much admired. I am

persuaded that this step will not only tend to promote the emigration to our country of substantial people from all parts of Europe, but the numerous copies I shall disperse, will facilitate our future treaties with foreign courts, who could not before know what kind of government and people they had to treat with: as in doing this, I have endeavoured to further the apparent views of Congress in the first publication, I hope it may be approved, and the expence allowed. I send herewith one of the copies.

To CHARLES THOMSON, ESQ. Secretary of Congress.

DEAR SIR, *Passy, May* 13, 1784.

Yesterday evening Mr. Hartley met with Mr. Jay and myself, when the ratifications of the definitive treaty were exchanged. I send a copy of the English ratification to the president. Thus the great and hazardous enterprize we have been engaged in, is, God be praised, happily completed: an event I hardly expected I should live to see. A few years of peace, well improved, will restore and increase our strength: but our future safety will depend on our union and our virtue. Britain will be long watching for advantages, to recover what she has lost. If we do not convince the world that we are a nation to be depended on for fidelity in treaties; if we appear negligent in paying our debts, and ungrateful to those who have served and befriended us; our reputation, and all the strength it is capable of procuring, will be lost, and fresh attacks upon us will be encouraged and promoted by better prospects of success. Let us therefore beware of being lulled into a dangerous security; and of being both enervated and impoverished by luxury: of being weakened by internal contentions and divisions; of being shamefully extravagant in contracting private debts, while we are backward in discharging honourably those of the public; of neglect in military exercises and discipline, and in providing stores of arms and munition of war, to be ready on occasion: for all these are circumstances that give confidence to enemies, and diffidence to friends; and the expenses required to prevent a war, are much lighter than those that will, if not prevented, be absolutely necessary to maintain it.

I am long kept in suspense without being able to learn the purpose of Congress respecting my request of recall, and that of some employment for my Secretary W. Temple Franklin. If I am kept here another winter and as much weakened by it as by the last, I may as well resolve to spend the remainder of my days here; for I shall hardly be able to bear the fatigues of the voyage in returning. During my long absence from America my friends are continually diminishing by death,

and my inducements to return lessened in proportion. But I can make no preparations either for going conveniently, or staying comfortably here, nor take any steps towards making some other provision for my grandson, till I know what I am to expect. Be so good, my dear friend, to send me a little private information. With great esteem, I am ever yours &c. B. FRANKLIN.

FROM DAVID HARTLEY, ESQ. TO DR. FRANKLIN.

SIR, *Paris, June* 1, 1784.

I have the honour to inform you, that I have transmitted to London the ratification on the part of Congress of the definitive treaty of peace between Great Britain and the United States of America, and I am ordered to represent to you,[1] that a want of form appears in the first paragraph of that instrument, wherein the United States are mentioned before his Majesty, contrary to the established custom in every treaty in which a crowned head and a republic are parties. It is likewise to be observed, that the term "*definitive articles*" is used instead of *definitive treaty;* and the conclusion appears likewise deficient, as it is neither signed by the President, nor is it dated, and consequently is wanting in

[1] Copy of a Letter from LORD CARMARTHEN to D. HARTLEY, Esq.

SIR, *St. James's, May* 28, 1784.

I received this morning by Lauzun, your dispatch No. 5, and the private letter of the 24th instant, together with the ratification of the treaty between Great Britain and the United States of America; and I own it was with the greatest surprise that I perceived so essential a want of form as appears in the very first paragraph of that instrument, wherein the United States are mentioned before his Majesty, contrary to the established custom observed in every treaty in which a crowned head, and a republic are contracting parties.

The conclusion likewise appears extremely deficient, as it is neither signed by the President nor is it dated, and consequently is wanting in some of the most essential points of form necessary towards authenticating the validity of the instrument.

I should think the American ministers could make no objection to correcting these defects in the ratification, which might very easily be done, either by signing a declaration in the name of Congress for preventing the particular mode of expression, so far as relates to precedency, in the first paragraph, being considered as a precedent, to be adopted on any future occasion, or else by having a new copy made out in America, in which these mistakes should be corrected, and which might be done without any prejudice arising to either of the parties from the delay. I am, with great truth and regard, Sir, your most obedient humble servant, CARMARTHEN.

P. S. I send you inclosed a copy of the ratification—part of the treaty, which it is also to be observed were previously described as "definitive *articles*."

some of the most essential points of form necessary towards authenticating the validity of the instrument.

I am ordered to propose to you, Sir, that these defects in the ratification should be corrected, which might very easily be done either by signing a declaration in the name of Congress for preventing the particular mode of expression so far as relates to precedency in the first paragraph being considered as a precedent to be adopted on any future occasion; or else by having a new copy made out in America in which these mistakes should be corrected, and which might be done without any prejudice arising to either of the parties from the delay. I am, Sir, with great respect and consideration, your most obedient humble servant, D. HARTLEY.

To His Excellency B. Franklin, Esq.

To His Excellency David Hartley, Esq.

SIR, *Passy, June 2*, 1784.

I have considered the observations you did me the honour of communicating to me concerning certain inaccuracies of expression and supposed defects of formality in the instrument of ratification; some of which are said to be of such a nature as to affect "the validity of the instrument." The first is, "that the United States are named before his Majesty, contrary to the established custom observed in every treaty in which a crowned head and a republic are the contracting parties." With respect to this it seems to me that we should distinguish between the act in which both join, to wit, the *treaty*, and that which is the act of each separately, the *ratification*. It is necessary that all the modes of expression in the joint act, should be agreed to by both parties; though on their separate acts, each party is master of, and alone accountable for, its own mode. If the ministers of the United States had insisted, or even proposed naming in the treaty the States before the King, it might have been deemed injurious to his dignity, as requiring him to acknowledge by that joint act their superiority. But this was not the case; on inspecting the treaty it will be found that his Majesty is always regularly named before the United States. How it happened that the same order was not observed in the ratification I am not informed. Our secretaries are new in this kind of business, which methinks should be favourably considered if they chance to make mistakes. They may have been led by some precedent; or being republicans, and of course preferring that kind of government as in their opinions more excellent than monarchy, they may naturally have thought it right when the two kinds were to be named in their own instrument, to give their own kind the precedence; an effect of

that sort of complaisance which almost every nation seems to have for itself, and of which the English too afford an instance, when in the title of the King they always name Great Britain before France. The Congress however adopted the form presented to them, and it is thus become an act of theirs; but the King having no part in it, if it is improper, it reflects only upon those who committed the impropriety, and can no way affect his Majesty. Whatever may have occasioned this transposition, I am confident no disrespect to the King was intended in it by the Congress. They as little thought of affronting his Majesty by naming the States before him, as your ministers did of affronting the Supreme Being, when in the corresponding first paragraph of their ratification they named the King before the Deity. There cannot be a clearer proof of this than what is to be found in the ratification itself. In the treaty the King, as I said before, is always first named. Thus the established custom in treaties between "crowned heads and republics" contended for on your part was strictly observed; and the ratification following the treaty contains these words, "Now know ye, that We the United States in Congress assembled, having seen and considered the definitive articles, *have approved, ratified, and confirmed*, and by these presents do *approve, ratify, and confirm* the said articles, AND EVERY PART AND CLAUSE THEREOF, &c." Thus all those articles, parts, and clauses, wherein the King is named before the United States, are *approved, ratified and confirmed*; and this solemnly under the signature of the President of Congress, with the public seal affixed by their order, and countersigned by their Secretary. No declaration on the subject, more determinate or more authentic, can possibly be made or given, which when considered, may probably induce his Majesty's minister to wave the proposition of our signing a similar declaration, or of sending back the ratification to be corrected in this point, neither appearing to be really necessary. I will however, if still desired, transmit to Congress the observation and the difficulty occasioned by it, and request their orders upon it. I can have no doubt of their willingness to give every reasonable satisfaction.

If the words *definitive treaty* had been used, instead of *definitive articles*, it might have been more correct, though the difference seems not great, nor of much importance, as in the treaty itself it is called the present *definitive treaty*.

The other objections are, "That the conclusion likewise appears deficient, as it is neither signed by the President, nor is it dated, and consequently is wanting in some of the most essential points of form necessary towards authenticating the validity of the instrument." It is true that the signature of the President is not placed

at the end of the piece. Among the infinite number of treaties and ratifications that have been made in different ages and countries, there are found a great variety in the forms, and in the manner of placing the seals and signatures, all however equally authentic and binding. Which of the precedents we have followed, I know not; but I think our ratifications have generally been sealed in the margin near the beginning, and the President's name subscribed by him, as it ought to be, near the seal. This is then our usage. And it has never hitherto been objected to by any of the powers with whom we have treated, not even by yourselves in our ratification of the preliminary articles exchanged in 1783. And I observe that your own method is not always uniform, for in your last ratification the King signs only at the end, in the first at both the end and the beginning. If we had, like older nations, a Great Seal, the impression of which, from its bulk and weight, could only be appended, the signature might properly be placed above it at the end of the instrument. Probably the want of an able artist prevented our having hitherto such a seal. In the mean time as all the parts of the instrument are connected by a ribband whose ends are secured under the impression, the signature and seal wherever placed relate to, and authenticate the whole. This is expressly declared by the Congress in the concluding sentence, viz. *In testimony whereof*, "we have caused the Seal of the United States to be hereunto affixed. Witness, His Excellency Thomas Mifflin, Esq. President, this fourteenth day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and eighty-four." It is thus that the duplicate before me is *dated*, in these words at length, and I apprehend the original exchanged must be the same, so that the essential article of a date was not wanting as supposed, but has been overlooked by the person who made the objection.

The ratification was passed in Congress unanimously, and the treaty will I firmly believe be punctually and faithfully executed on their part; we confide that the same will be done on yours. Let us endeavour on all sides to establish the "*firm and perpetual peace*," we have promised to each other, and not suffer even the prospect of it to be clouded by too critical an attention to small forms and immaterial circumstances. With great esteem and respect, I have the honour to be, Sir, your Excellency's most obedient and most humble servant, B. FRANKLIN.

To DAVID HARTLEY, Esq.

MY DEAR FRIEND, *Passy, January* 3, 1785.

I received your kind letter of December 1 from Bath. I

am glad to hear that your good sister is in a fair way towards recovery; my respects and best wishes attend her.

I communicated your letter to Mr. Jefferson, to remind him of his promise to communicate to you the intelligence he might receive from America on the subjects you mention; and now having got it back, I shall endeavour to answer the other parts of it.

What you propose to draw up of your opinions on American negociation, may be of great use, if laid, as you intend, before administration, in case they seriously intend to enter on it after the meeting of parliament: for I know your ideas all tend to a good understanding between the two countries and their common advantage; and in my mind too, all selfish projects of partial profit are the effects of short-sightedness, they never producing permanent benefits, and are at length the causes of discord and its consequences, wherein much more is spent than all the temporary gains amounted to.

I do not know that any one is yet appointed by your Court to treat with us. We some time since acquainted your minister with our powers and disposition to treat, which he communicated to his Court, and received for answer that his Majesty's ministers were ready to receive any propositions we might have to make for the common benefit of both countries, but they thought it more for the honour of both, that the treaty should not be in a third place. We answered that though we did not see much inconvenience in treating here, we would, as soon as we had finished some affairs at present on our hands, wait upon them, if they pleased, in London. We have since heard nothing.

We have no late accounts from America of any importance. You know the Congress adjourned the beginning of June till the beginning of November. And since their meeting there has been no account of their proceedings. All the stories in your papers relating to their divisions, &c. are fiction, as well as those of the people being discontented with Congressional Government. Mr. Jay writes to me, that they were at no time more happy or more satisfied with their government, &c. than at present, nor ever enjoyed more tranquillity or prosperity. In truth the freedom of their ports to all nations has brought in a vast plenty of foreign goods, and occasioned a demand for their produce, the consequence of which is the double advantage of buying what they consume cheap, and selling what they can spare dear.

If we should come to London, I hope it may still be with you that we are to do business. Our already understanding one another may save on many points a good

deal of time in discussion. But I doubt whether any treaty is intended on your part, and I fancy we shall not press it. It may perhaps be best to give both sides time to enquire, and to *feel* for the interests they cannot *see*. With sincere and great esteem, I am ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately, B. FRANKLIN.

To THE HON. JOHN JAY, ESQ.
Minister for Foreign Affairs.

SIR, *Philadelphia, Sept.* 19, 1785.

I have the honour to acquaint you, that I left Paris the 12th of July, and agreeab.e to the permission of Congress am returned to my country. Mr. Jefferson had recovered his health, and was much esteemed and respected there. Our joint letters have already informed you of our late proceedings, to which I have nothing to add except that the last act I did as Minister Plenipotentiary for making treaties, was to sign with him two days before I came away the treaty of friendship and commerce that had been agreed on with Prussia, and which was to be carried to the Hague by Mr. Short, there to be signed by Baron Thulemeyer on the part of the King, who without the least hesitation had approved and conceded to the new humane articles proposed by Congress, which articles are considered as doing that body great honour. Mr. Short was also to go to London with the treaty for the signature of Mr. Adams, who I learnt when at Southampton is well received at the British Court. The Captain Lamb, who in a letter of yours to Mr. Adams, was said to be coming to us with instructions respecting Morocco, had not appeared, nor had we heard any thing of him; so nothing has been done by us in that treaty. I left the Court of France in the same friendly disposition towards the United States that we have all along experienced, though concerned to find our credit is not better supported in the payment of the interest money due on our loans, which in case of another war must be, they think, extremely prejudicial to us, and indeed may contribute to draw on a war the sooner by affording our enemies the encouraging confidence that a people who take so little care to pay will not again find it easy to borrow. I received from the King at my departure the present of his picture set round with diamonds, usually given to Ministers Plenipotentiary who have signed any treaties with that Court, and it is at the disposition of Congress, to whom be pleased to present my dutiful respects. I am, Sir, with great esteem, your most obedient and most humble servant, B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. Not caring to trust them to a common conveyance, I send by my late Secretary, W. T. Franklin, who will have the honour of delivering them to you, all

the Original Treaties I have been concerned in negociating that were completed. Those with Portugal and Denmark continue in suspense.

To * * * *.

SIR, *Philadelphia, Jan.* 19, 1790.

I received the letter you did me the honour of writing to me respecting the construction of the eleventh article of the treaty of commerce between France and the United States. I was indeed one of the Commissioners for making that treaty, but the Commissioners have no right to explain the treaty. Its explanation is to be sought for in its own words, and in case it cannot be clearly found there, then by an application to the contracting powers.

I certainly conceived that when the *droit d'aubaine* was relinquished in favour of the citizens of the United States, the relinquishing clause was meant to extend to all the dominions of his most Christian Majesty, and I am of opinion, that this would not be denied if an explanation were requested of the Court of France, and it ought to be done, if any difficulties arise on this subject in the French Islands, which their Courts do not determine in our favour. But before Congress is petitioned to make such request, I imagine it would be proper to have the case tried in some of the West India Islands, and the petition made in consequence of a determination against us. I have the honour to be, &c. B. FRANKLIN.

END OF THE PRIVATE CORRESPONDENCE.